

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN TUNISIA AFTER THE 2011 REVOLUTION

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Signature:*SAMIRAS*.....

5/10/2013

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ABSTRACT

Since 1994, various policies and guidelines, pertaining to modifying the language policy in Tunisia have been disseminated. All of these policies highlighted the importance of English as a global language. Despite all these policies and guidelines, the English language is still experiencing problems within schools and society alike. These problems prevent the language from developing and functioning accurately in the country. The actual requirements of English language learning are still not integrated into the general considerations of the political agenda. In order to determine what factors teachers perceive as important with regard to the situation of the English language in Tunisia, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches were conducted. The data was gathered by means of an intensive literature study, as well as utilisation of surveys and interviews. After analysing the data, specific conclusions were reached. The findings of my research indicate certain trends, for instance the discrepancy between policy makers' practises and the teachers' expectations of change. Additionally, the research highlighted teachers' needs and desires for a better future. Certain recommendations in this regard have been made. Recommendations on how a clear vision could assist with the attainment of the best linguistic situation in Tunisia have also been made. The recommendations with regard to the study could be utilised to support the national educational reform post revolution in Tunisia in order to promote English language teaching and cope with globalization across the world.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALESCO	Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation
AR	Action Research
BA	Bachelor of Arts
CA	Classical Arabic
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CELTA	Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CREFOC	<i>Centre Regional De L'éducation et de la Formation Continue</i>
DELTA	Diploma of English Language Teaching to Adults
DSTP	Draw See Think Plan
EAP	English for Academic Purpose
ECSSR	The Strategic Centre of Strategic Sciences and Research
EdD	Doctorate of Education
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIAL	English as an International Auxiliary Language
EIIL	English as an International or Intra-national Language
EILP	English as an International Language Pedagogy
ELT	English Language Teaching

EMA	Euro-Mediterranean Agreement
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Special Purposes
EWL	English as a World Language
FGI	Focus-Group Interview
FL	Foreign Language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IMEF	<i>Institut Des Metiers D'enseignement et De Formation</i>
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LP	Language Policy
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
NDP	Ninth Development Plan
PD	Professional development
PPP	Present, Practice, Produce
PRINCE	PRojects IN Controlled Environments
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely
SRR	Stimulus Response Reinforcement
STP	Situation Target Path

TATE	Tunisian Association of Teachers of English
TBS	Tunis Business School
TD	Teacher Development
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching English to speakers of Other Languages
TEYL	Teaching English to Young Learners
TOEFL	Test Of English as a Foreign Language
TPR	Total Physical Response
TT	Teacher Training
TTT	Teacher Talking Time
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
US	United States
WB	World Bank

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Preamble

Language policy (LP) is a persistently controversial issue in several countries around the world for various reasons. Sometimes it is due to the structure of society, which is made up of ethnic minorities who speak diverse native languages. Therefore, in a multicultural context, an appropriate single language needs to be selected for use in educational situations. Whereas, in other countries, the native language is not deemed appropriate for instruction at school either because the whole school curriculum is imported, or because the available materials are written in a different language. A third possibility, which is recurrent mostly in countries that were colonized in the past, is that LP is imposed by post-colonial situations mainly for economic or political reasons, and it is under constant review. However, linguistic situations depend largely on social contexts, which are unique to each country.

Tunisian society, for instance, is homogeneous; it consists of ninety nine per cent Arab people who speak the same language, Arabic (L1), but with different accents. French (L2) was officially declared the *second* language after the independence from French colonization in 1956. Ever since, the French language has had a strong influence on education. Describing the linguistic situation in Tunisia, Daoud (2001) said that it was complex and dynamic adding “particularly since independence from France in 1956, Tunisians have had different experiences with the languages used in the social and work environment, the educational system, government, and the media” (Daoud, 2001, p.2).

Nowadays, English, which has for a long time been considered a foreign language (FL), is gaining ground over Arabic (L1) and French (L2) in schools with the globalization movement and the expansion of technology. Harrabi (2010) claimed that “the growth

of business and increased occupational mobility is resulting in a need for English as a common medium of communication” (Harrabi, 2010, p.2).

Additionally, language has always been associated with culture and identity. Language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from one generation to the next (Emmitt & Pollock 1997). Learning a new language involves the learning of a new culture (Allwright & Bailey 1991). The debate over LP in Tunisia has never been settled. Various changes have occurred over the past few years in the educational field, such as Arabisation of scientific subjects or deciding on stages for introducing the English language. Daoud (2001) said that “Such experiences have produced discontinuities with respect to language and literacy and helped to shape different attitudes towards these languages. Language policy and planning in Tunisia have been both instrumental in shaping such experiences and attitudes and subject to their influence” (Daoud, 2001, p.2). Languages of instruction at schools were and still are under scrutiny. Issues, such as, should sciences be taught in Arabic or in French and when should the English language be introduced in schools are being discussed these days.

There seems to be a strong controversy between calls for globalization, openness, and modernity, which enhances the western languages, French and English, as languages of science and technology, on the one hand, and Arabisation, which emphasizes the Arabic language in order to preserve the traditional culture and identity on the other. According to Wenger (1998) the discourses of globalization are mostly in English and the media plays its role in making them available throughout the world, and having no access to English may mean not only difficulty of access, but also total impossibility of participation. Whereas, according to Daoud, Arabisation, “has been considered an essential means to remove the vestiges of colonialism which still permeate the governmental and educational systems as well as the cultural and social environment” (Daoud, 1991, p.2).

However, the question in the Tunisian context is deeper than favouring L2 or marginalizing L1. To date, French is mainly an instructional medium for scientific subjects at schools and universities alike, whereas English is seen as a language of research for advanced studies. Therefore, the issue is not merely a linguistic dualism; rather it is a multidimensional controversy, as it deals with three *rival* languages - Arabic, French, and English - rather than two. Hence, a balance between Arabic, French, and English should be reached with special attention to social norms, political frameworks, and future ambitions.

1.1. Nature of the problem

Nowadays, with the advent of the Arab Spring and in particular the 2011 Tunisian revolution, an important element - the spirit of freedom - seems to have arisen in society and helped people voicing their concerns, discussing problems, and calling for reforms in various sectors across the country. Therefore, emergent interventions to fine-tune the path of the Tunisian revolution and to adjust vital concepts and values in society are taking place. LP, for instance, is one emergent question that seems to be the order of the day amongst politicians, educationalists, and people in the street alike. This is evident through articles in the daily papers, posts in online forums, discussions in social networks, and debates in TV programs. Although Tunisian society is open to western cultures and languages, some people still associate these languages with colonialism, imperialism, and imported cultures that might have negative impacts on society. However, Tunisians are worldly-wise, well informed, and long for a better future; the new generation will not accept being left behind. The solution for such a debate needs to be well thought out and strategically planned in order to balance Arabic conservatism on the one hand and the western attractions of globalization and openness on the other.

1.2. Rationale and significance of the study

Throughout my investigation I intend to illuminate myself and readers and provide a comprehensive picture of language and specifically Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) policy in Tunisia. My research addresses the following aims with a prospective view which may serve future developments in Tunisia and hopefully in other nations seeking further development.

1. To explore experiences of TEFL teachers and their understanding of language policies.
2. To gain awareness of the current situation in Tunisia and the kind of initiatives teachers in the field undertake and the reasons and factors which affect their choice.
3. To provide teachers with the opportunity to voice their views on how TEFL can be improved in their own context.
4. To create an awareness of all the above among teachers, the local community, and policy makers in order to consider the implications of the study for improving TEFL's situation in Tunisia.

I expect my investigation to provide insight into the TEFL experiences of teachers in Tunisia, the factors which influence the current linguistic situation in the area, and critical issues pertaining to language. I intend to highlight the lessons that can be learnt from experienced teachers in terms of the effects of changes on the educational system and the students' performance. The results of the study are expected to be significant in better understanding the local situation from the perspectives of insiders -TEFL teachers - by gaining insight into their experiences. I also expect my study to draw attention to the significant amount of untapped expertise that exists within the researched context which has not received much in-depth analysis to date nor been disseminated among teachers.

My prime objective is thus to contribute to existing knowledge and research relating to the current TEFL situation in Tunisia through recognition of teachers' voices and to stimulate interest in further investigation into specific aspects associated with TEFL development in different socio-cultural settings.

1.3. Research questions

Throughout all of my research, two fundamental questions guided me:

1. What do EFL teachers in Tunisia think of the current approach to TEFL?
2. What are the main elements of the current national debate about the projected LP in Tunisia?

1.4. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, chapter two provides detailed information about the background of TEFL in Tunisia, and the context within which I carried out my investigation. Chapter three reviews the literature on language policies and the expansion of English in the age of globalization. Moreover, within this chapter the conceptual framework that guides my research will be discussed. Chapter four introduces the research design and methodology that underpin my study. It also includes details of data collection and analyses, along with a discussion of research quality issues. Chapter five presents the findings, a descriptive analysis of data, and a discussion of the interpreted findings in relation to the research questions. Chapter six discusses the implications of the findings in light of the literature and suggests recommendations for TEFL reforms in Tunisia in order to illuminate future developments. The thesis ends with chapter seven, which comprises a summary of key ideas of my research and a personal reflection on my Doctorate of Education (EdD) thesis journey.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter describes the background of the study, and the existing linguistic situation in Tunisia. The description starts with a historical overview of the Tunisian social structure, and then it gives an account of social changes and growth in the last decades. The report also includes a brief description of economic situations and political discourses of Tunisia after the independence (1956) on the one hand, and the situation after the 2011 Revolution on the other. The analysis is based on common historical sources and serves as a necessary background reading for the study. This chapter ends with a section detailing the progress of the educational system in Tunisia since independence primarily focussing on TEFL. The data presented in this section emerge from the work of education specialists and scholars who have studied the linguistic situation in the country over the years.

The current study takes place in Tunisia, a North African Arab country, where the population is about 10.5 million as per the latest statistics of 2010. It is a Muslim, developing country. People are ethnically a mixture of Arab and indigenous Berber stock, but succeeding waves of Carthaginians, Romans, Spanish Muslims, Ottoman Turks, and more recently French and Italian settlers have had a profound effect on cultures, social structures, and values.

Tunisia got its independence in 1956 after 75 years as a French protectorate and a colony. It is regarded as a modern Arab nation and is often referred to as a westernized Arab country. Since independence, Tunisia has witnessed significant economic and social development. Because Tunisia does not have a wide range of natural resources, it has focused on human resources and diversifying its economy. However, despite Tunisia's economic and social development, its record on political freedoms is limited.

It was for a long time a police state, with little freedom of expression or association, and with serious human rights problems.

After the revolution in January 2011, we can point to some political development and social changes. For instance, people no longer feel oppressed, and a feeling of freedom is prevailing in the country. This new trend has encouraged people to look for changes and reforms of old systems across different sectors, which were seen as corrupted and unfair. This wave of reforms involves the educational sector among others.

2.1. The Linguistic situation in Tunisia

In this section, I will discuss the linguistic situation in Tunisia from different perspectives. Firstly, I will provide an overview of the historical background of languages in Tunisia to illuminate the research and make possible connections with the present time. Secondly, I will examine the linguistic situation from a socio-cultural perspective. Then, I will have a close look at economic and political perspectives in order to get a wider view of the language situation. Finally, I will consider the educational aspect which is the main concern of this research.

2.1.1. Historical perspectives

While conducting this research, it came to my attention that bilingualism in Tunisia started at a remarkably early point in the country's history. The first language spoken by the native people of Tunisia was designated *Berber* (barbarous) by the Romans and with the Libyc alphabet. Then with the advent of the Phoenician civilization and the creation of the Carthaginian Empire (814–146 BCE), the Punic language was introduced. This was the beginning of bilingualism in society, Libyc-Punic, which then evolved into Libyc-Latin with the Roman domination (146 BC–349 CE). Punic had survived more than six centuries before Latin became the official language. Meanwhile,

the Vandals dominated for nearly a century. The Roman society was revived with the Byzantine Empire (533-647 CE). The Greek language was dominant until Arabic was introduced with the spread of Islam in North Africa. Traces of the Greek language are still evident in the Tunisian language to date. Arabic was introduced in 647 in Tunisia, and took 50 years to develop and to become the dominant language. In the 11th century, it eventually became the official language of Tunisia with its literary diversification and regional dialects. Arabic-Berber bilingualism developed in the period 1050-1052, by that time Berber the original language started losing its status in society until it became spoken by less than point five per cent of Tunisians; mainly in the south. (Daoud 2001; Baccouche, 1998; Battenburg, 1999)

Arabic did not stand alone for a long time; several other languages of subsequent invaders and neighbours of Tunisia came to prominence. Firstly, the Spanish language had a great effect in Tunisia due to the exodus of Arab-Berber Moors when Spain reclaimed its territory from them from the 11th to the 14th centuries. Spanish terms are still found today in names of families, towns, and objects alike mainly in coastal areas. By the end of the 14th century, and after a long rivalry between the Christians (mainly Spanish) and Muslims (mainly Turk), the Turks took control of Tunisia for about five centuries. This civilization also left visible traces in the Tunisian language and culture. In the 20th century, Italian and French took part in the linguistic contest in Tunisia. The Italian and the French communities living in Tunisia at that time exceeded 150.000 settlers. Daoud claims "Italian is particularly evident now in the lexicon of the following sectors: industry and crafts, building, agriculture, marine activity and the arts" (Daoud, 2001, p.6). He also notes that along with Italian, there was much interference between Arabic and Maltese while trading, which helped boost a pidgin called *Lingua Franca*; with a French matrix and embedded Spanish, Moorish, Italian, Corsican, Maltese, Berber, Arabic and Turkish expressions. According to Bannour (2000), *Lingua Franca* "was widely spoken by merchants and seamen, in particular, and occasionally served as the written code of legal documents (e.g. Commercial contracts) as well as the language of diplomacy" (Daoud, 2001, p.6).

When the French protectorate regime started in 1881, French became the official language for administration and in public schools. By the time Tunisia gained independence in 1956, French was prevailing in the administrative and educational systems. Daoud stated “it is currently difficult for academics and journalists to clearly distinguish its status as a second or foreign language” (Daoud, 2001, p.8).

Currently, with globalization and the arrival of science and technology, the linguistic situation is of varying complexity. It is enhanced by several foreign languages but mainly English.

2.1.2. Socio-cultural perspectives

Nowadays, the linguistic situation is varied, people in Tunisia speak and write more than one language. They speak Arabic, which is the native language; they also speak French and English. Additionally some people speak languages such as German, Spanish and Italian. In this section, I will provide an overview of the different languages in use from socio-cultural perspectives.

Arabic is the mother tongue of the Tunisian people. There are three varieties in Arabic. Firstly, the Classical Arabic (CA), it is associated with Islam and religious texts mainly *the holy Quran* and *the Hadith* - the prophet's sayings -. It is grasped fluently by few people who were mostly educated in *Quranic* schools. Stevens comments “Classical Arabic is esteemed as a symbol of authenticity and Arab unity and for its religious significance. At the same time, it is perceived as the antithesis of modernism and felt to be deficient” (Stevens, 1983, p.101) Secondly, the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is a *modernized* version of CA, started in the mid-20th century in an effort to extend a sense of global culture in the Arab world. Its original purpose in the Maghreb - Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia - in the post-colonial era was to replace French as a medium of expressing modernity and reinforce a sense of nationalism. MSA is taught as a subject in state schools and is used as the medium of instruction in elementary education and most subjects in the secondary sector. Presently, MSA is seen as easier

than CA; however, it is a learned language rather than a mother tongue. Lastly, Arabic dialects which are spoken as the mother tongue. The Arabic dialects are not unique to each Arab country but also vary from one region to another within the same country. Therefore, the linguistic situation in Tunisia may be described as diglossic, which refers to the use of various forms of Arabic along a written/ spoken continuum.

Tunisian Arabic is the language of everyday communication, and it is worth noting that an important ratio of the dialectal Arabic vocabulary in Tunisia is borrowed or adapted from French and Italian as stated in (Ennaji, 1991). Stevens among others states that “Tunisian Arabic is overtly condemned while covertly serving as the real prestige language of the country” (Stevens, 1983, p. 101).

The second language in use is French because the country has long been considered a francophone stronghold. Even after independence in 1956, in spite of the efforts and progress in Arabisation, Tunisia continued to use French as a tool for modernization and development in its society. The results of French control in Tunisia, for more than seventy years, were not only for political or economic dominance, but mainly cultural. Colonization, therefore, targeted social identity by marginalizing the Arab language and constraining its use. The French enhanced differentiation through power structures within which Tunisians had to speak French in order to thrive socially, economically, or politically. French was no more the language of the colonizer; it had become part of everyday communication. The colonial administration’s language planning had ideological goals; they implemented the language in government, business, and secular education. Arabic speakers were compelled to acquire knowledge of French for political, economic, or social mobility, and the high status that accompanied this mobility thus elevated the perception of French. There were several attempts to Arabize Tunisia, but this goal was not achieved. It had to be postponed for pragmatic reasons, which put the demands of modernism before those of authenticity when necessary. Stevens contends that “French is esteemed for its connotations of modernism but perceived as a threat to national unity” (Stevens, 1983, p.101).

In 1988, the national pact highlighted the national character of Arabic. In 1999, a Prime Minister's circular banned foreign languages in all correspondence addressed to Tunisians and in all internal documents of the government. The circular established a tight deadline of, December 2000, for the Arabisation of all software and all administrative forms. This decision was felt unreasonable and the deadline was unattainable. Dictionary work has fallen far behind the timetable due to the lack of training programs to train people to use the new lexicon.

The French government at that time did not appreciate the movement of Arabisation which was a serious threat to French in Tunisia; they criticized the decision of closing down of the TV channel *France 2* and banning several French newspapers and magazines. This led to tension between Tunisia and France. And then Arabic/French rivalry continued for years. At the same time English has begun to spread in a few sectors such as education and business.

Nowadays, debates over the status of foreign languages, French and English, are still going on, with this powerful controversy being felt across the country. Some favour emphasizing French for its significant presence in the country and the progress it went through in the last decades. It is also easier to choose French because of the availability of documents, books and materials in French. Therefore, such a decision can save money and time. However, other views reject this position and demand replacing French with the modern "*global English*". In their performance, researchers are trying to justify these points of view. For example, Salhi (1984) claimed that French has a particular status. It functions as a *second* language because of historical and cultural reasons, whereas English is the first *foreign* language. But Battenburg (1997) highlighted the fact that there is considerable support to the growing global interdependence of the world on English and the on-going vanishing of French as a language of world communication and trade. The rivalry between English and French in Tunisia is apparent. For instance, various debates are taking place at a government level looking at the possibility of adopting English instead of French as the medium of instruction. Akkari (2000) seems to agree with this suggesting that "the French

themselves have begun to recognize the inadequacy of their language and its loss of international prominence” (as quoted in Daoud, 2001, p.44).

English is emerging as another linguistic option, as stated in Hemissi (1985). He said that recent developments in Tunisia regarding English language policy and planning indicate the decline in French linguistic influence. Daoud added that “Tunisia still suffers from a lack of functional users of English, primarily in the business and communication sectors of the economy” (Daoud, in press, as quoted in Daoud, 1996, p.599). Walters (1998) added that only two or five per cent could be counted as proficient users of English in Tunisia.

Finally, as stated earlier, Payne (1983) documented the existence of other foreign languages that are still present in Tunisia today for instance, Italian and Spanish. These languages date back to the colonial periods and early ages. They are spoken today by few people mostly in touristic areas. German is also prevalent in these areas. TV channels and music play a vital role in spreading the different languages and their own cultures. Salhi (1984) also noted that German, Spanish, and Italian were re-introduced as optional foreign languages in schools.

2.1.3. Socio-economic perspectives

Economic factors are of paramount importance when studying linguistic situations; they are among the variables which affect processes of language change or could also be responsible for its death. The socio-economic background provides clear explanations for the current language status. Tollefson (1991) for example stated that “language is built into the economic and social structure of society” (Tollefson, 1991, p. 2).

Language planning depends on the economic situation of the country and language use depends on available opportunities, such as resources or jobs. People need languages not only for communication but also for economic growth. Therefore,

language planning relates cultural identity to economic and political development. For instance, people in Tunisia were compelled to achieve good knowledge of French for political, economic, or social mobility. French enjoyed a high level of esteem that was associated with social mobility, which elevated the rise of French in government and the people alike. Nowadays, people have different linguistic needs; they are looking for better command of English. Indeed the number of English language centres is increasing dramatically. This business is flourishing; it targets both children and adults alike. Moreover, people are now looking for proficiency certificates such as IELTS, TOEFL, CELTA and DELTA.

On a national level, various projects that were intended to further develop the English language encountered financial problems and could not be supported, such as the government's decision to implement English in primary schools. There were difficulties such as budgets for textbooks, teacher training, and hiring of enough teacher trainers to train newly recruited teachers for non-specialist primary levels teachers.

On the international level, according to Battenburg (1997) the amount of money France spends to support and promote French in Tunisia is much higher than the budgets granted by the UK and the US to improve English in Tunisia. He said that in 1996 while the USA and Britain spent 600.000 and 400.000 dollars respectively on promoting the study of English in Tunisia, France spent 20 million dollars. This implies that France is working on *preserving* the image of the domination of French in Tunisia.

2.1.4. Political perspectives

Tunisia has had its independence for more than five decades; however only three governments have ruled the country so far, with policies not having gone through any major changes or movement towards different perspectives.

After Tunisia's independence in 1956, the first constitutional council acknowledged Arabic as the official language of Tunisia and French as a second language. Its policy was to improve both languages. Educational reform began with the educational reform Law of 1958. Laying out a ten-year plan intended to:

1. Unify the various school systems (*kuttab*, French, bilingual schools) into a bilingual system administrated and controlled by the ministry of education.
2. Establish a new organizational school structure; a 6-year primary cycle, a 7-year secondary cycle for schools, and then a 3 to 5 year university course.
3. Nationalize the curriculum and restore the primacy of Arabic as the medium of instruction.
4. Establish education as free at all levels.
5. Increase enrolment of all areas, especially of girls and in rural areas.

The political discourse of former President Ben Ali in 1990 as described in (Daoud, 2001) focused on the following elements;

1. Enhancing functional literacy in Arabic.
2. Improving basic proficiency in foreign languages, mostly French and English.
3. Fostering computer literacy.
4. Promoting learning autonomy.

Today, in the transitory period, the political discourse of President Marzouki included the following proposals on LP:

1. Enhancing translation into Arabic
2. Encouraging digitization of Arabic books
3. Promoting the use of Arabic in science
4. Banning the single-foreign-language system that makes the Maghreb Francophone and the Mashreq Anglophone
5. Teaching different foreign languages to different groups of students

Besides, Ennahda requested to promote Arabic and mainly SA. Ennahda is a moderate Islamist political party in Tunisia, also known as Renaissance Party. On March 1, 2011, after the government of Ben Ali collapsed in the wake of the 2011 Tunisian revolution, Tunisia's interim government granted the group permission to form a political party. Since then it has become the largest and most-organized party in Tunisia, so far outperforming its more secular competitors. On October 24, 2011 Tunisian Constituent Assembly election, the first elections since the Tunisian Revolution, the party won thirty eight per cent of the vote, and 89 of the 217 assembly seats, far more than any other party.

However, Ennahda's commitment to promote SA raised a few issues, for instance, the presumption that the French language might no longer be as important as it used to be in Tunisia. But, Hssine Jaziri, a member of the political bureau of Ennahda, denied such an undertaking and stated that "Tunisia has a historical relationship with France that we should continue and improve on all levels. We should take into consideration the recent Franco-Tunisian generation." He also thought that "being more open to other countries does not jeopardize our relationship with France but it rather enriches it." He even claimed that to encourage French enlightenment in Tunisia is essential, and added "the French language is a part of some Tunisians' lives (especially the ones with a dual citizenship), and therefore is important to all Tunisians. It will always be the second language in Tunisia" (Tunisia alive, 2010).

Recently, the Ministry of Education declared its aims to raise the level of Education in Tunisia, as published in *Tunisia alive*. The question now is: Will this project include TEFL?

2.1.5. Educational perspectives

Education is given great prominence by society and the government alike in Tunisia. According to the latest statistics, adult literacy is around sixty seven per cent (seventy nine per cent for men and fifty five per cent for women), and primary school enrolment of six to 15 year-olds reaching ninety five per cent (9th Development Plan, NDP, 1997–2001). The basic education for children between the ages of 6 and 16 has been compulsory since 1991 in different parts of the country. In 2001, nineteen point nine per cent of the state budget was spent on education in Tunisia. In 2005, the literacy rate was sixty six per cent, and the access to higher education rate was twenty seven per cent. Moreover, Tunisia ranked 17th in the world category of "quality of the [higher] educational system" and 21st in the world category of "quality of primary education" in (The Global Competitiveness Report, 2008-9) released by The World Economic Forum. Today ninety nine per cent of school age children attend class, the nation therefore having long since attained the objective that United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) has projected for the year 2015.

The learning journey starts with pre-school education for 3 to 6 year-old children; it is optional and is provided in kindergartens with varying fees depending on the location and the facilities being offered in the venue. However, basic education is compulsory and free for 6 to 16 year-old children; it is made up of two cycles. The first stage consists of six years and is provided in primary schools, while the next stage consists of three years and it runs in colleges. This course is certified by a certificate of graduation from basic education to enable graduates to attain secondary education. The latter is also free and is taught in high schools for four years, it is sanctioned by the International Baccalaureate diploma for access to higher education. Tunisia has different

universities and institutes around the country; higher education is also free of charge in addition to the availability of loans and scholarships.

To complete the big picture of the educational system it is worth mentioning the private school system, which has changed in form and substance in the last few decades. In the past, private schools used to open doors for unfortunate children who failed in government schools, who were dismissed or did not want to repeat a grade. But today there is a new system of private schools which claims to implement methods and programs similar to those applied in France or in the US, such as Lycée Massignon and the American international School. These schools were originally intended to educate the children of expatriates, but nowadays, they attract more and more Tunisians, currently sixty per cent of the students are Tunisians as stated in Wikipedia. They particularly come from the upper class of Tunisia; they are attracted by the multicultural courses and the possibility of pursuing higher studies abroad. These schools are implementing different curricula and offer different languages as media of instruction. Additionally, private education is becoming common in the tertiary level. Now that public institutions have less flexible admission criteria, many students found their favourite choice in private universities, which are growing as a lucrative business in Tunisia.

2.1.5.1. Languages in the educational system

In this section, I will provide a general overview of the different languages used in education, that is to say MSA, French, English, Italian, Spanish, and German. This will be followed by a detailed description of the English language background and development within the educational system.

MSA is the first language (L1), it is taught as a subject in the Tunisian educational system, and is used as the medium of instruction in elementary education from grade 1 to 6, and preparatory education, from grade 7 to 9. Both levels are combined in the basic school system, which consists of 9 years. French is introduced as a FL in the 3rd

year of primary level, and then turns to a second language (L2) used in secondary and higher education as a medium of instruction for sciences, technology, and business subjects. English has gone through various stages. Firstly, and for almost 30 years, it used to be introduced as a FL in the first grade of the secondary level, which consists of 4 years. Later on, in 1994, more changes occurred in the educational system, TEFL was started earlier, which was in grade 5 or 6 of the primary school. English is then carried on in higher education institutions, as an English for Special Purposes (ESP) course or English for Academic Purpose (EAP) depending on specialties and faculties (Daoud, 1991; Payne, 1983; Hemissi, 1985; Kennedy, 1985). Additionally, more foreign languages are introduced in the final stage of the secondary level, such as Spanish, German, and Italian. Studying a third FL is optional; students may choose one language for two years before university, which opens up new opportunities in higher education.

2.1.5.2. TEFL in Tunisian Education

TEFL has gone through various changes with views of improving the status of the English language in Tunisia. Judd (1992) noted that the growing demand for the English language in different sectors in Tunisia, in the past few years, which has led to major developments in social language planning and in language-in-education policy and planning. Whether these changes have led to developments in TEFL or have merely scratched the surface of the issue is to be explored in this investigation.

Today English is a compulsory subject for all students, it is taught across different levels in schools as follows: 2 hours per week in the primary school for grade 6, 3 hours weekly for grades 7, 8, and 9 in the preparatory school, and 3 hours per week for secondary level student from grade 1 to 4 in public schools but 4 hours in model schools – schools for the elite students who get the best scores in national exams. Preparatory and secondary students are scheduled 2 hours in class and 1 hour in the lab, if there is one.

In 1980, the government launched a new project entitled, the Pioneer Secondary School, which was intended at first to introduce English as the medium of instruction for all subjects in order to prepare highly-qualified graduates to continue their studies in English. The process was very selective; teachers were handpicked and given special training, and new materials were designed. It was a competitive system and had excellent results for years. The project was soon abandoned in 1988 due to financial problems. For example, the Tunisian government could not afford to send all students to Britain or the USA without financial assistance. French, therefore, continued to be the medium of instruction. Salhi (1984) claimed that the Pioneer English School experiment was a significant case study of ELT and LP in Tunisia.

In the 1990's TEFL went through encouraging changes; new locally-produced textbook series were introduced in 1993 to achieve the communicative approach. But according to Daoud (1996) this change did not have a sound strategic plan to help teachers in the field do the right move. He said "The official methodology is "eclectic and essentially communicative" (Direction Generale, 1993, p. 3); however, the eclecticism exercised by teachers is largely uninformed and based on their own experience as former learners and apprentice teachers" (Daoud, 1996, p.600).

However, Daoud among others believes that "predominant views of language as functional/structural rather than communicative and of language learning as behaviouristic rather than cognitive/affective," affect the different areas related the English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum. For example, syllabus, methodology, in-service training, and testing, and that the most pressing issue to address is teacher education as claimed in (Hassini, 1994), "the goal being to change teachers' attitudes about speech and language learning and teaching" (quoted in Daoud, 1996, p.600).

Another important change took place when English was made compulsory for all students and sections of the secondary level in the same decade. Next was the government's decision to introduce English in the primary level; first as a club, no exams, and then as a mandatory subject with a curriculum and assessments. In-service

training was then granted to primary teachers through workshops and summer programs, which helped develop teachers' English skills in implementing the communicative approach in primary level. In addition to collaboration with the British Council to prepare non-specialist primary teachers to teach English. This program helped teachers in the field reach a wider insight on new educational trends and familiarize themselves with the latest methodologies as used in the UK educational system.

The ministry of education and the British Council signed an agreement in February 2009 to improve the English reform project aiming at producing a new generation of school leavers who will be competent communicators in English, as well as in their first language, Arabic, and second language, French. The push for English is part of a wider policy by this former French colony to change its education system and address a growing problem of youth unemployment by improving vocational training and developing a workforce that will attract investment from Europe and can find work in rich Gulf countries (the Guardian, Friday 6 February, 2009).

2.1.6. Recent changes/ foreign affairs/ Prospective changes

In addition to the changes that took place in TEFL in the past decades as discussed above, there are several foreign attempts from interested groups to diversify languages and implement new language policies to cope with global issues in Tunisia.

In the following part, I will provide some examples of the events and agreements taking place in order to improve TEFL in Tunisia before and after the 2011 Revolution.

Judy (1999) for example, while talking about the agenda of the *boundary 2* editorial meeting in Tunisia held in spring 1998, said that the most important thing was to collect significant individuals from the sectors of commerce, higher education, and finance who have significant stakes in English-language education in Tunisia in order to establish a sustainable long-range dialogue across sectors. The aim was to identify

problems and develop models for realizing viable programs of English-language studies and education.

An international conference was held in Tunis by the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) in collaboration with the World Bank (WB) and the Qatar Foundation for Education with the participation of Arab and foreign experts. The conference was part of the ten-year education development plan in the Arab world that was decided in the 2008 Damascus Arab Summit. The Arab program aims to improve education quality and to further develop education systems in the Arab world. The action plan was to revise education curricula, methods in use, and improve assessment and management systems of educational institutions. It will be implemented by ALECSO, in co-ordination with the Secretariat of the Arab League. The agenda of the conference included a presentation on the Arab program and papers on missions of institutions concerned with the management of the project and the consultative scientific council and on expanding partnership as part of the quality-support program in the education sector in the Arab world.

Additionally, different countries are trying today to expand the English language in Tunisia for political and ideological reasons mainly after the revolution, and the changes in the political agenda. They are offering to help Tunisia either by suggesting new projects or enhancing the existing ones, such as The UK assistance through British Council programs. For instance, an update about the Tunisian-British program to improve ELT in educational institutions was published in the Ministry of Education website. A meeting was held on Wednesday March 23, 2011, in Tunis between Education Minister and a delegation from the British Council led by the Director of the British Council for the Middle East and North African Region. As reported in the ministry website, the program aims at developing ELT through 1) providing books and implementing new programs, 2) providing training, and 3) focusing on assessment. Members of the British delegation said that “the program will help, thanks to the fruitful cultural cooperation between the United Kingdom and Tunisia, to achieve significant

results likely to enhance the position of the English language and its presence in different education cycles in Tunisia” (See Appendix 11).

The United States (US) is also playing an important role in Tunisian reforms. The US plan is to offer Tunisians, with an emphasis on youth, more English-language training, educational exchanges, and cultural programs; and look for new ways to build security and intelligence cooperation. The political discourse stresses that deeper US cooperation depends on real Tunisian engagement. (The Guardian, 2009)

On Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2011, the Canadian ambassador met with the Education Minister, he pointed out that the Tunisian Revolution is close to achieving its main purpose, namely the consecration of democracy. He claimed that Canada supports this peaceful and democratic transition and pledges itself to make short and long term social and material assistance, and at all levels, to the country's development. He also confirmed Canada's commitment to back up the Education Ministry's efforts, to upgrade the quality of teaching, and to undertake reviews of syllabuses, in accordance with the requirements of the stage (See Appendix 12).

Moreover, the director of the Foundation of the Mediterranean region, expressed his appreciation for the Tunisian Revolution. He added that "it is a historical stage in its regional Mediterranean environment." He stressed during his meeting, on Wednesday, March 9, 2011 in Tunis, with Education Minister, the Foundation's willingness to strengthen co-operation with the Tunisian government in all fields, such as education, culture and science (See Appendix 13).

2.1.7. Population of this study

The population of this study consists of Tunisian educationalists. The majority of the participants are teachers from primary, preparatory or secondary levels with one teacher trainer for primary teachers and one secondary level English supervisor. They both have a vast experience in teaching the secondary level. The study involved two

phases, a random survey and scheduled one to one in depth interviews. (See Appendices 7, 8, 9)

The sample cannot be called statistically representative of the overall population of the educational system, but my intention was to gain a deeper understanding about the issue rather than generalize the findings. Detailed profiles of the participants will be included in the methodology chapter.

Conclusion

Tunisia has and is still developing new policies across different political and cultural sectors. The progress is highly esteemed at national and international level. However, much more changes and research need to be achieved in order to reach satisfactory standards at all levels. This study is an attempt to contribute in the process of building a new Tunisia.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A comprehensive review of the literature about ELT as a FL, LP, and current practices in Tunisia will help in designing an appropriate framework for this study. Chapter 3 consists of three parts.

In the first part (3.1), I will explore the different approaches to TEFL with a view of positioning the Tunisian perspective and practices in the TEFL field.

In part two (3.2), I will discuss the English language status quo and its position worldwide, along with the effects of globalization, and then try to relate them to the Tunisian context in order to sketch a latent perspective for the current LP and potential changes.

In the last part (3.3), I will review historical studies about the English Language situation in Tunisia and the debate over English LP in use.

3.1. A SYNTHESIS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING: MAJOR APPROACHES FROM TRADITIONAL TO CURRENT

Foreign Language learning was long associated with the learning of Latin and Greek in the West which started in the seventeenth century. Both languages were supposed to develop their speakers' intellectualism. The focus was mainly on grammatical rules, syntactic structures, memorization of vocabulary, and translation of literary texts. There was no provision for the oral use of the languages. This Classical Method came to be known as the Grammar Translation Method in the nineteenth century, it offered remarkably little beyond an insight into the grammatical rules attending the process of translating from the second to the native language. Grammar Translation has no rationale or theory to back up its practices; its main goal for students is to learn a language in order to read its literature. The Grammar Translation Method is still one of the most popular approaches and a favourite model of language teaching amongst a wide range of teachers around the world. It remained resistant to educational reforms, but was criticized for its limited contribution to language learning since it has shifted the focus from the use of language to grammar, and failed to enhance a student's communicative competence in the FL.

However, when Europeans began to travel out of their home regions more often in the 18th century, they felt an urgent need for oral proficiency in foreign languages. After debating the best ways of teaching languages, the grammar translation approach was proven ineffective. A reform movement came with the Direct Method in order to improve oral language. The new approach called for orally integrating the target language within instruction. This method gave primacy to a conversational style in the target language, banned the use of mother tongue and translation in learning, and emphasized pronunciation. The method called for teaching words and sentences in context in order to make meaning clear, while grammar should be taught inductively, and rules are generalized from practice and experience with the target language. The Direct Method gets its name from the fact that meaning is to be conveyed *directly* in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students' native language (Diller, 1978).

It faced considerable difficulties mainly in public schools and declined because of various constraints; for instance budget, time, and classroom size. Later on it was revived, and then led to the Audio-lingual Method, which is the American equivalent of the British method - Situational Language Teaching developed - and applied from the 1930s to the 1960s and based on systematic research. Unlike the Direct Method, vocabulary and grammar are carefully selected and graded in the oral approach. Classroom practice includes the Present, Practice, Produce (PPP) model and the practice phase consists of the extensive use of oral drills. Similarly, the Audio-lingual methodology used the Stimulus Response Reinforcement (SRR) model and attempted through a continuous process of such positive reinforcement, to create good habits in language learners. Audio-lingualism involved imitation and memorization of set phrases. It relied heavily on repetitive drills in teaching structural patterns. The method also called for learning vocabulary in proper context by using visual aids. The focus was on pronunciation and immediate reinforcement of correct responses.

CLT introduces the idea of *functions*. CLT requires *communicative competence*, and using language for a communicative purpose such as booking a hotel room or asking for direction. The procedure involves; information gaps, role plays, games, and a more learner-centred class. The main aim is to be able to use language for communication. CLT consists of broad principles, which allow for a wide variety of classroom activities. It tends to be an umbrella approach, and various current instruction models are merely new versions of CLT, for instance; 1) The Natural Approach, which is based on the belief that language can only be *acquired* subconsciously, and conscious *learning* is only useful to monitor self-correction. 2) Cooperative Language Learning, which advocates cooperative activities such as process writing and literature circles. This instruction promotes learning in groups through cooperative learning techniques and strategies-3) Content-based instruction refers to teaching different subjects in English, this instruction claims to widen vocabulary ranges and expose the learner to real language in authentic context. 4) Task-Based Language Teaching involves students doing tasks at first, and then comparing their production to the native speakers' outcome in order to grasp a better insight of language in context. 5) Functional/ Notional Approach, this method stresses a means of organizing a language syllabus. The emphasis is on breaking down the global concept of language into units of analysis in terms of the communicative situations. These approaches and many others adhere to CLT approach principles and share the theory

that backs this approach, even if, each approach comes up with different strategies and techniques in implementation.

New theories in linguistics, for instance Chomsky's, concentrated on the structure of language, while psychologists focused on the affective and interpersonal nature of learning in general. Based on both perspectives, different methods were proposed. Nunan (1989, p. 97) referred to these methods as "designer methods" because they were tailored methods which suit different contexts. For example, the Total Physical Response (TPR) method combines English with physical movement. It relies on the belief that this combination of skills allows the student to assimilate information and skills at a rapid rate. The basic tenets are: Understanding the spoken language before developing the skills of speaking. Imperatives are the main structures to transfer or communicate information. The learner is motivated and given an individual readiness period in order to begin to speak when he feels comfortable and confident in understanding and production (Asher, 1977).

Meantime strategies-based instruction, like those mentioned by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) among other linguists, emphasised the importance of style awareness and strategy development in ensuring mastery of a FL. Brown (2000) summarized the principles of this approach in the ten commandments 1) lower inhibition, 2) risk taking, 3) self-confidence, 4) intrinsic motivation, 5) cooperative learning, 6) upright-brain process, 7) ambiguity tolerance, 8) practise intuition, 9) process on feedback, and 10) setting personal goals.

Nowadays, the Suggestopedia Method is based on a modern understanding of how the human brain works and how we learn most effectively. It was developed in the 1970's by Georgi Lozanov. Its name is derived from suggestion and pedagogy; it means similar accelerated learning approaches. Some of the key elements of Suggestopedia include a rich sensory learning environment, for instance, pictures, colour, and music. This method promotes a varied range of techniques such as dramatized texts, music, active participation in songs and games, etc.

Finally, the Community Language Learning Method, is famous for being very learner centred, for example, students create their own syllabus: they sit around a table with a tape recorder and come up with their own text which the teacher helps them to correct or translate if necessary. Such an approach requires advanced learning skills, which are not always available in language learning.

All the methods discussed above (among others) have been tried and tested by teachers in different parts of the world for many years. However, researchers along with scholars never ceased the search for better approaches, which remain elusive. The world of language learning is getting bigger and more diversified and every single learning context depends on various factors for instance cultural and social situations.

3.1.1. How does all of this link to the Tunisian context?

So far, I have reviewed different approaches to TEFL. My aim was to grasp clearer views on current approaches in the field, and identify theories backing possible methods currently in use in Tunisia.

In my pilot study, I asked teachers in Tunisia about methods applied in teaching English at different levels; primary, preparatory, and secondary schools, and most of them answered that they are eclectic and do not follow a specific method. They claimed that they choose appropriate techniques to their context, and apply procedures from different methods as they see fit. Although they all remember their own teachers and praise the results of the audio-lingual method used at that time, no one admitted using this method in class. They follow broad principles of the CLT but do not subscribe to a particular method. In order to understand better this attitude, I tried to ask about the advantages and disadvantages of certain methods, but the teachers tended to recall mainly techniques and strategies, they even got confused sometimes when it came to methods' names or principles.

Moreover, it is very important to recognize the role that textbooks play in directing teaching methods. Thornbury (2009), for example, stated that course books generally follow a cognitive model, where declarative knowledge is proceduralised through successive practice activities. He added that the role of the teacher is to mediate and apply the course book materials by following instructions. Therefore, the teacher follows the approach chosen by the authors while writing the book. Moreover, teachers who claim not to be following a method, but who are using a course book, are as much method-bound. Thornbury (2009) claimed that teachers usually argue that they use course books selectively, in accordance with their own principles as well as the needs of the learners. But, however selective teachers are, they are still tied to a theory of language, embodied in the way that the course selects and describes language, and to a theory of learning, as demonstrated in the way the course prioritizes certain types of activity over others.

As a result, we need to ask the following questions: To what extent can teachers *avail* the privilege of being free to select strategies they consider appropriate in TEFL? And how could their choices be deemed right?

3.1.2. Teachers' roles

Researchers have been aware that teachers as implementers are the most important players. Studies have demonstrated that implementers do not always do as they are told nor did they always act to maximize policy objectives (Cohen & Ball, 1990; McLaughlin, 1987). Moreover, teachers had often been diagnosed as “resistant to change” or just simply lazy when they ignored or subverted curricular innovations (McLaughlin, 1987; Smit, 2005). Spillane, Reiser, and Reimer (2002) looked at their situations in a different light, explaining that this is because implementers often lack the capacity, the knowledge, skills, personnel, and other resources necessary to work in ways that are consistent with policy. Spillane et al., warned that even if implementers construct understandings that reflect policymakers' intent, they may not have the

necessary skills and resources to do what they understand the policy to be asking of them.

3.2. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING LANGUAGE POLICY

In this section, I will review the literature about the spread of English across the world and diverse views of LP. It is in my plan to explore work in the field of LP, and I will refer to Tunisia as a background rather than essence for the study. Therefore, I will discuss the English Language situation in Tunisia with a view of identifying crucial key elements of LP. This will help me identify and suggest possible future English LP in the Tunisian context.

3.2.1. The importance of English

The English language is a vital means of communication for millions of people around the world. In 1997, Crystal stated that “English is now the dominant or official language in over 60 countries and is represented in every continent” (Crystal, 1997, p.106). He also said that eighty five percent of international organizations in the world use English as an official language of communication, and some published articles in some academic fields, such as linguistics, are written in English. However, this tendency to use English is growing very fast. According to the British Council, today English is now the official or dominant language for two billion people in at least 75 countries, and around 750 million people are believed to speak English as a FL. Therefore, speakers of English as a second language outnumber those who speak it as a first language. Nowadays, English is the world's *lingua franca* because it is the most common language used in scientific, technological, academic, and international communication. This is in line with Crystal stating “Most of the scientific, technological and academic information in the world is expressed in English and over eighty per cent of all the information stored in electronic retrieval systems is in English” (Crystal, 1997, p.106). However Pennycook, (2001) argues that while English is needed it should not

disadvantage Arabic or other native languages. Consequently, the spread of English has its solid critics, who view global English, as a medium for linguistic imperialism such as Phillipson, (1992) or even extermination of native languages, for instance, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000). However, others such as Crystal (1997) argue that English is *the* language of global communication, scientific resources and publications. Troudi (2009) believes that the English language is a necessity for students because most of their resources, including the electronic versions on the Internet, are in English.

Kachru (1985, 1992) presents this sociolinguistic profile of English in terms of three concentric circles: The inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle. (See figure 1) The inner circle represents the traditional basis of English, where English is the primary language. The countries in this circle are the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The outer circle comprises the institutionalized non-native varieties of English in such countries as India, Nigeria and Singapore. These countries have a colonial history connected to the users of the inner circle. English is used quite intensively and extensively in the daily lives of the people and has established new norms shaped by new sociocultural and sociolinguistic contexts. The expanding circle comprises countries where performance varieties are used. In such countries as China and Turkey, English functions as an international language. I believe Tunisia belongs to the latter circle because English is barely spoken in daily life and it is learned as a FL. Indeed, it is mainly used for international communication. I have therefore added Tunisia to the expanding circle in the figure below.

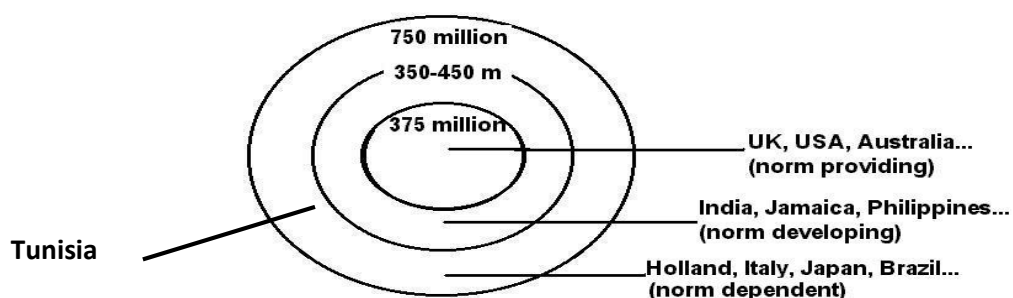


Figure 1: Language Circles

3.2.2. Globalization

Globalization is about the transmitting and sharing of ideas, technologies, and practices. It goes beyond imperialism and westernization. Globalization is an international phenomenon that deals with universal issues. Giddens, for example, stated that globalization is about “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities” Giddens (1990, p. 64). Globalization, therefore, goes beyond geographical borders and localness; it offers openness and brings significant changes to the world. Held et al argue that Globalization is about “the widening, deepening, and the speeding up of interconnectedness on a world-wide scale” (David Held, et al, 1999, p.2). Globalization, thus, has strong economic, political, cultural and social dimensions. Graddol (1997) identified two stages of globalization; 1) extension of global media and business to reach different parts of the world 2) relocation of global media and business in order to meet different social and economic contexts throughout the world.

Spolsky (2004) believes that the global spread of English as the world’s number one language is less linguistic and more economic, technological, political, social, religious and structural. Furthermore, he believes that such a phenomenon cannot be simply attributed to language management. It can reflect local and individual language decisions which take place as the result of ecological changes that happen in the world’s language system. The consequences of the global spread of English in local and international contexts therefore raises the issues of models, norms and goals in language pedagogy. I will try to investigate these models in learning English and their basic assumptions, the eventual effects and changes they bring about with the purpose of identifying their usefulness in the Tunisian context.

3.2.3. New approaches to English teaching

The worldwide awareness of the importance of English, and the evolving needs of the learners who are definitely affected by the progression of globalization, along with the inadequacies and imprecision of the previous models, lead some researchers (e.g. McKay, 2003) to re-examine common ELT assumptions. This process has given way to a new approach described English as an International Language Pedagogy (EILP). This approach is concerned more with the world's human relations, which was made possible by expansions in information and communication technology (ICT). These new conceptual frameworks were seen as practical substitutes for EFL/ESL models, and they have been recommended by different scholars. These approaches have different names, for example, English as an International or Intra-national Language (EIL), Smith (1978); or English as an International Auxiliary Language (EIAL), Smith (1978); and English as a World Language, (EWL), Nunan (2000).

I believe this new approach to learning English, EILP, brings about a new pedagogy, which coincides with the rise of task based language teaching and learning. In order to subscribe to the EILP, any curriculum should be reframed taking into consideration the goals of EILP.

3.2.4. Learning Purpose

In this study, I will discuss the effects of globalization on the need to learn the English language in Tunisia in order to cope with new international trends and standards. The first question that comes to my mind when I think of learning English in any context is; what is the purpose of learning English in Tunisia?

The primary learning purpose for English language in Tunisia is not social because Tunisian students do not learn English in order to communicate with their family members and friends, they also do not need the English language to go shopping, or

to communicate with Tunisian employees in different institutions. Tunisian students use Arabic - their native language - at home and in the local community, and do not aim to replace Arabic with English in the local environment. However, students can communicate in English in Tunisia with tourists and expatriates living in the country. They can also communicate with English-speaking people through the internet. Therefore, the prime purpose of learning English is not social but rather academic and professional. The following question then is; what do students need to learn in English and what should be the model learning approach in the Tunisian context? In order to answer such a question we need to identify the appropriate LP, which will provide an emergent framework to learning English in the Tunisian context.

3.2.5. Language policy

LP is an issue of critical importance all over the world today. However, it has different perspectives and deals with a variety of language issues depending on local contexts. Troudi, (2009) suggested research has to be done before implementing a new LP, and this is in line with (Ricento, 2006; Spolsky, 2004; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). In order to discuss LP we need to consider three contexts: political, cultural and global, and we need to explore their importance. Spolsky (2004), for example, argues that LP deals with ideas of correctness of a language; bilingualism and multilingualism; language death and efforts to preserve endangered languages; language choice as a human and civil right; and language education policy through looking at language practices, beliefs, and management of social groups. He develops a theory of modern national LP and the major forces controlling it, such as the demands for efficient communication, the pressure for national identity, the attractions or resistance to English as a global language, and the growing concern for human and civil rights as they affect language. Therefore, LP involves various patterns such as educational policies, historical factors, identity factors, legal issues, linguistic ideologies, beliefs and how these forces interact in existing practices.

Spolsky (2004) thinks that LP is best understood as the relationship between three factors; language practice, ideology, and management: 1) the language practices, which means the way a linguistic variety is habitually selected in a society, 2) the language beliefs and ideology refers to the beliefs about language and its use, 3) the language planning and management, which is a deliberate language manipulation or intervention.

Therefore, LP is particular to each country and largely depends on different situations and contexts. LP in any country can favour or discourage the use of a particular language or set of languages. It can also promote one language at the expense of others. In addition, policies could be designed to protect and promote the national language. LP is then diverse and depends on various factors, which are unique to each country and cannot be generalized.

Therefore, language planning is about the government's policy to determine how languages are used and which language skills need to be enhanced in order to meet national priorities or to establish the rights of individuals. Wright (2004), for instance, describes the three major themes in the field of LP and planning as: 1) how language has been used as an organizing principle and mobilizing force in nation building, 2) what is actually happening, as the processes of globalization bring citizens of these nation states into ever greater contact, 3) how groups whose languages have been eclipsed in nation building (or through unequal competition with the languages of those more politically and economically powerful) are engaged in reviving these languages in what could become a post national era. Ferguson, for example, argued "All language planning activities take place in particular sociolinguistic settings, and the nature and scope of the planning can only be fully understood in relation to the settings" (Ferguson, 1977, p.9). Sociolinguistic setting should include standards that affect language practices and beliefs. According to Ruiz (1984) there are also three fundamental orientations from which languages are viewed: a) language as a problem; b) language as a right; and c) language as a resource. While discussing LP in the UAE, Troudi (2009) contends "Local decision-makers need to look at the issue of language policy

very seriously” taking into consideration the specific linguistic and cultural needs” (Troudi, 2009, p.9).

3.3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE USE IN TUNISIA

The various approaches to LP discussed above are certainly essential elements to setting and implementing LP. In this study, I adapted Spolsky’s framework, and I explored the proposed elements in his model; 1) language practices 2) language beliefs and ideology 3) the language planning or management, with a view to exploring the current perspective of English LP in Tunisia. I will also take into account the interference of global, national, and local forces. This is in line with Spolsky (2004) who believes that LP making is one of the most productive grounds within which to examine interactions among global, national, and local forces.

3.3.1. Language practices

Studying LP starts with exploring language practices, and then identifying the way linguistic variety is selected and used in society. Spolsky (2004) believes that to find out about the LP of a speech community, the first step is to study its actual language practices. He refers to Dell Hymes’ (1974) *ethnography of communication* and what others call the sociolinguistic repertoire or the linguistic ecology (as explained in Spolsky, 2004). It would be interesting to study all the languages used in Tunisia; however it is beyond the scope of this thesis, so I will focus mainly on practices and uses of English Language in Tunisia.

The most recent census, conducted by the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs, showed that “ten per cent of the population knew how to read and write English. Among these ten per cent the mastery of the language and degree of proficiency vary from elementary to advanced, culminating with those who hold doctoral degrees in the field of British and American Studies” (Bahloul, 2001).

Moore (2007) pointed to two languages; Arabic and French. She thought they are frequently used by people for everyday communication. However, she thought English was used in the same way. She stated “The Tunisians I interviewed intimated that Arabic and French peacefully coexist in Tunisian society” she equally argues that although the languages are used for different purposes, they are both characteristic of post-colonial Tunisian identity. However, Bahloul (2001) contended “Arabic and French are in a deadly race for linguistic supremacy; the two major languages in Tunisia (Arabic and French) are in a state of flux which is considerably influencing the development of English, so far on the periphery of the language scene.” He also believed that Tunisian students have positive attitude towards English in comparison with French stating “The positive attitude towards English has been addressed at great length in a number of studies” (Bahloul, 2001).

Hawkins (2008), based on research carried out in Tunisia, and using examples from academia and the Internet, found out that Tunisians have great abilities to deal with information communication tools through different languages. He argued “what is linguistically important about these examples is not the language used, but the global discourses and language ideologies of which they are a part. Whatever language Tunisians use in these discourses, Arabic, French, or English, they use them in similar ways, so that there is standardization despite linguistic diversity. Frequently, power resides in the mastery of the discourse, rather than mastery of a language.” This indicates that Tunisians have good commands of communication, and are able to learn and use different languages. I believe Hawkins (2008) refers to an important theory, since learning skills and the mastery of discourse are at the origin of learning languages.

3.3.2. Language beliefs and ideology

Languages have always been associated with beliefs, ideologies, and how people like to use them. I believe there are two levels of beliefs. 1) Beliefs related to people and how they perceive language and 2) Beliefs carried by the new language to be learned. Additionally, in line with Warschauer (2000) culture is an integral part of language learning, but the approach toward culture is multifaceted, taking into account the diverse cultures of the many people who speak English around the world. Pennycook (1995) points out that English carries a set of ideologies, values, and norms based on the history of its development and use. Bahloul (2001) argues in the past, English in Tunisia was studied “for no particular purpose other than that of being part of an educated person's intellectual and cultural baggage.” But it has a more important role as a “tool for global outreach which is being reflected all over the country.” He also stated there is a growing appeal for English among younger Tunisians, and this is in line with (Payne 1983; Twyford and McCune 1984; Kennedy 1985; Bahloul & Seymour 1991; Daoud 1998; Walters 1998, cited in Bahloul, 2001).

Policy makers in some Arabic speaking countries tend to adapt a FL as a means of instruction at schools, for instance French in Tunisia or English in the UAE, but this strategy seems to be criticized by scholars. Troudi (2009), for example, argues that English as a language of instruction policy is not the best solution for development, information management, and economic growth. Contrary to the common belief among some policy planners, Troudi (2009) argues “This situation is more evident in the Arab world, where there is a dire need to bridge the digital divide and to bring effective reforms to current teaching pedagogies” (Troudi, 2009, p.11). He agreed with Abbott who contends “in many countries, the teaching and use of English at primary school level is less a cultural invasion than an unnecessary invitation” (Abbot 1992, p. 175). Moore (2007) states “Language, after all, facilitates sharing ideas and building a sense of community” (Moore, 2007, p.12).

There are different approaches of dealing with issues of culture in teaching. However, these approaches depend on teachers, learners, and the purpose of learning English. In this research, one aim is to explore the ideology and beliefs behind the use of English in Tunisia, and to find out if English language is perceived as a vehicle of communication or a means of invasion.

The future of English teaching has been directly linked to the changing global economy, which in part is influenced by the recent revolution in telecommunications (Warschauer, 2000; Crystal, 1997). Bahloul, (2001) advocates English is further enrichment of the Tunisian linguistic marketplace and Tunisians have good reasons to believe that English will be enhanced in Tunisia. This is in line with what Walters (1998) calls the *seeping spread* of English in Tunisia. However, Bahloul (2001) expressed his fear from the resentment of English intrusion among *Arab nationalists* and the *Islamic fundamentalists*, just as they deeply resented the French reign.

Two persistent questions at this point need answers. Are social and political discourses today similar or different from those belonging to the pre-revolutionary period? And could attitudes and beliefs have changed from what was reported before 2011? I believe the research reviewed so far are very important and informative. However, the recent situation should be investigated more while exploring Tunisia today; these elements will be considered in the interview questions.

3.3.3. Language planning and management

Planning and implementing LP is mostly the government's job; policy makers are responsible for language manipulation and planning. Decisions about implementing LP reflect social, political, diplomatic, and economic factors and they have tremendous effects on societies. Troudi (2009), for example, discusses the importance of making decisions about language at school. Fasold (1984) argues "one of the most crucial language planning decisions that a country can make is the determination of a

language to serve as a medium of instruction in schools”(1984, p. 292 as quoted in Troudi, 2009).

Moore (2007) while investigating the language situation in Tunisia claimed “language policy in Tunisia may hold greater power in the social, rather than formal political, realm.” Earlier, Battenburg (1997) claims English and French are competing in Tunisia and, “Tunisian officials as well as representatives of the American, British and French government are often reluctant to admit that such a contest is occurring” (Battenburg, 1997, p. 282). However, the rivalry between French and English can be seen in the educational institutions and programs in Tunisia where language planning relies mostly on external funds. Bahloul (2001) suggests shifting to English in education, arguing “If a technology transfer scheme is a top priority on the political agenda of this country, then betting on the French language for that matter will be a total fiasco, and ultimately a reported failure. English as an international language seems at present and in the Tunisian context a safer bet and an entry visa to that global village.” Daoud (1996) adds “the growing demand for English as the means of access to modern science and technology and to economic development has led to interesting changes in the linguistic orientation of many developing countries, particularly those that inherited a language other than English from their former colonial power,” he contends that Tunisia as a former French colony, is *the case in point* “where such changes concern both English language policy decisions and implementation strategies, mainly in the educational system” (Daoud, 1996, p. 598).

Additionally, Daoud (1996) claims “the ever-growing demand for English has, in the past few years, led to major developments in language planning or, more precisely, language-in-education policy and planning (Judd, 1992), which raises questions about the wisdom of the national educational policy on English, how it is implemented, and how it affects the ELT profession in Tunisia” (Daoud, 1996, p. 599).

Fitouri (1983) argues that the LP situation in Tunisia needed to be adjusted. He believes that studies in the field have clearly highlighted learning difficulties due to

bilingual education. He stated “in a situation like this, however, common sense calls for a measure of boldness in the revision of the present educational and linguistic policy... it is quite clear that contact with the world through learning foreign languages and cultures can be achieved quite well in an atmosphere different from the atmosphere of conflict inherited from the colonial era and in a context of transcultural education” (Fitouri, 1983, p.300).

Khatibi (1993) proposes a strategy to decide what the priorities are in terms of language learning and language use in a North African situation, he suggests “Arabic should remain the official language in North Africa; ... English as the first FL language because of its global status.” Whereas, Labbassi (2008) claims “some non-Anglophone communities use English to resist the injustices they endure inside their countries, contribute to universal knowledge and correct a stereotypical image of their culture in the West.” These ‘responsible’ uses of English depart from the imperialistic, hegemonic view of English depicted by some Critical Linguists (Canagarajah 1999; Pennycook, 1995; Phillipson 1992; Holliday 1994).

So far, it is obvious that various scholars requested a change in the LP; however, we need to consider the opposite view too. Phillipson (1992), for example, believes that the spread of English can also be one of many factors contributing to the tragic loss of native languages around the world.

In this chapter, I presented an understanding of different approaches to TEFL, and then discussed theories of planning and implementing LP. I have also discussed the relation between LP and language use in Tunisia in addition to TEFL policy. Following this, I have discussed the various perspectives on LP implementation. A brief insight into the existing gap between language planning and management is also included in the approaches to LP discussed.

This study is an attempt to narrow the gap between LP theories and implementation through researching teachers' views on TEFL policies in Tunisia. The next chapter deals with the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

To address the goals of this study, I developed a multi method research strategy that supported the exploratory nature of the current interpretive qualitative research approach. This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of my research, the overall study design and the study's multiple data collection and data analysis activities used to collect sufficient data to answer the study's research questions. This chapter also highlights the methodological issues and limitations I encountered.

4.1. Theoretical Framework

Denzin & Lincoln described qualitative research as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3).

The study is exploratory in design; and qualitative in nature seeking information about current practises in Tunisia. I will attempt to explore the TEFL status quo in Tunisia and the elements of LP debate through teachers' perceptions and attitudes about the current situation in schools, and the LP debate initiated in the country, with a view of identifying their desires and expectations for a projected TEFL situation. The research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What do EFL teachers in Tunisia think of the current approach to TEFL?
and
2. What are the main elements of the current national debate about the projected LP in Tunisia?

The study is informed by the following socio-cultural perspective; learning is the process of understanding how to participate in the discourse and practices of a particular community (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). And repeated social interactions gradually help researchers make sense of these experiences on a higher and abstract level (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Teachers have different beliefs and perceptions about the situation of Teaching English in Tunisia. These beliefs reflect teachers' attitudes and practices as noted in Richards and Lockhart (1996) "what teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe" (Richards and Lockhart, 1996, p. 29). I planned to enquire about social practices with experienced teachers in order to collect and analyse narrative data, while focusing on teachers' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, aspirations, and desires for the future.

Following exploratory aims and design, the study examined and illuminated social phenomena through the ontological perspective that different realities exist, and these differing - often competing - realities will be assigned different values, though they are often taken for granted and often seen as independent of the very factors that give them shape (Richards, 2003). In line with this view, social reality is constructed, my immediate goal is to understand, rather than to explain, and the main focus is on process rather than product. Underpinning this perspective is the epistemological view of the paradigm; how we can understand these existing realities.

I explored, described, and aimed to understand the teachers' perceptions and realities (Creswell, 1998). The paradigmatic assumption is that Interpretivist/ Constructivist theory can deepen our understanding of teachers' beliefs and attitudes, which is constructed through a combination of individual and social processes (Vygotsky, 1978) on the one hand. On the other, we can approach this through internalization, which is

a critical process in which people convert conceptual elements into mental functions (Vygotsky, 1978).

The research is also concerned with examining issues of power and control when discussing LP. The study therefore could embrace subjectivity because it is value-laden and is openly ideological. It is necessary to recognize that differences in teachers' views about the current TEFL situation in Tunisia may occur and should be carefully considered. Additionally, education is never neutral - it is a political act. According to Silverman (2005) "the German sociologist Weber (1946) pointed out nearly a century ago; all research is contaminated to some extent by the values of the researcher" (Silverman, 2005, p. 257). He also argued that only through those values do certain problems get identified and studied in particular ways. Within my context, and bearing in mind the complexity of the situation, it is to be hoped that an awareness of the inevitable opinions and attitudes brought to this study by the researcher, allied to a vigorous attempt to reach the highest possible ethical and academic standards for conducting such research, will minimize any adverse effects upon the study and allow for certain conclusions to be reached and proposals put forward in a fair and open-minded way.

4.2. Researcher's Position

I was part of a TEFL team in Tunisia for five years from 1994 to 1999. I experienced teaching in secondary schools as well as in the tertiary level and delivered ESP courses to students of Art. However, I left the country twelve years ago to embark on an international multicultural professional experience. Currently, I teach TESOL to Emirati students in the Higher Colleges of Technology. I am part of a multicultural team representing at least ten different nationalities; American, British, South African, Australian, Tunisian, Syrian, Turkish, Russian, French, Lebanese, and Canadian among others. Therefore, I believe it is a very special experience to explore and investigate the TEFL situation in my own country through my colleagues' perceptions

while being physically away from the current situation. I would simply describe myself as *semi-detached* because I belong by nationality and personal history to the setting under scrutiny and I am extremely interested in researching it. However, I have not been involved in all the internal events and changes in Tunisia for more than a decade.

I would also consider myself, and aim to be, an expert in the field of research in line with the following views. The difference between experts and novices in a community is that experts can identify deeper and less apparent principles, organize their knowledge around important concepts and contextualize this knowledge to specific situations. In addition, experts can apply these concepts to shape their understanding of new situations by noticing patterns, relationships, or discrepancies that are not apparent to novices (Sabers et al., 1991; Schwartz & Bransford, 1998).

Such a position, I assume, allows me to see clearly TEFL issues in Tunisia and to understand better the situation in depth with more objectivity. I will explore and familiarize myself with the topic as it typically occurs when a researcher becomes interested in a new topic, or when the subject of study itself is relatively new. In my case there are a few more aspects that triggered the researcher's curiosity in me. 1) my new status as researcher in the field, 2) the 2011 revolution and its effects on Tunisians' attitudes to change, freedom, and democracy, and 3) the in depth professional development and the extremely rich professional experience I received in the last decade in the UAE.

I believe my exploratory research seeks to break new ground; it will yield new insights into a topic for research, and might ultimately turn into a source for grounded theory.

4.3. Exploratory Research Methodology

As discussed earlier, research is a form of social inquiry, and exploration is a perspective. Stebbins contends “exploration is a state of mind, a special personal orientation” (Stebbins, 2001, p.30), toward approaching and carrying out social inquiry. Exploratory research therefore, is a methodological approach that is primarily concerned with discovery and with generating or building theory. Stebbins draws on Milles’s “On Intellectual Craftsmanship” (Milles, 1959, p.195-226).

A qualitative research design - including exploratory design - is the “logic that links data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study” (Yin, 2009, p. 24). Moreover, an exploratory study is typically conducted when not much is known about the situation under scrutiny. It is conducted to better comprehend the nature of a problem when very few studies might have been considered in that area. In the following section I will formulate my own design for the study based on the literature stated above.

The first stage was about seeking more information and gaining familiarity with the phenomenon in order to understand better what is occurring before developing or designing a study. I conducted extensive interviews, read, and searched the internet for more information in order to grasp better knowledge and develop the design of the study.

In the second stage, I conducted an intensive review of the related literature. My aim was mainly to identify what is *already* known about this topic. I found out *sufficient* information about the current status of TEFL in Tunisia and what has been done so far to improve it.

Thirdly, I planned a pilot study with groups from the target population in order to try the research tools, improve and ensure the validity of the methods.

Lastly, I designed the study, and implemented the research methods in light of the information gathered through previous stages. I used interviews and surveys with individuals with different viewpoints, which allowed me to see the topic from different perspectives, as well as generate ideas and insights for the development a process. This is in line with exploratory research principles, which favour triangulation and encourage the use of focus groups or small group discussions in order to illuminate the study on the one hand and ensure credibility on the other.

The following section in the methodology addresses the research methods, the data collection method, and data analysis perspectives. I will make use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches.

4.4. Research Methods

The study is based on a mixed-method approach, but is mainly qualitative, seeking a wide range of in depth information in order to understand better teachers' perceptions about TEFL status quo and the current LP in Tunisia. Therefore, it is about collecting and analysing *descriptive* data, while focusing on people's attitudes and beliefs. The mixed-method approach helps widen the range of data and ensures variety as well as credibility. The design of the current research follows suggestions made in Creswell (2002); the mixed-method framework in exploratory research follows a sequential design, for instance open-ended interviews then a survey instrument. The aim here is - firstly, to develop themes from the data emerging from interviews, and then to use the survey statistics for presenting data through visual tables, in order to compliment the textual description.

Moreover, I believe a mixed-method design helps in mitigating against the failure of any single approach and the choice of the survey tool helped by adding some figures to enrich the qualitative analysis and interpretation of the data. This is in line with Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) stating that the weaknesses of quantitative and

qualitative research can be offset by the strengths of both. Words can add meaning to numbers and numbers can add precision to words. The quantitative data were used to guide the formation of propositions, whilst it was important to remain aware that wider extrapolation would be of limited validity.

Qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, rather than rely on a single data source. Then they review the data and make sense of it, organizing it into categories or themes that cut across all of the data sources.

The data collection process in this paper came in three stages using three different research tools; 1) Focus-Group Interview (FGI), 2) one-to-one interviews, which are both qualitative methods, and 3) a survey, which is quantitative in design, but served to explore the situation further rather than to conduct a statistical check.

4.4.1. Qualitative Research Methods

Struwig and Stead (2001) state “qualitative research is any research, which uses qualitative data. Qualitative data refer to any information the researcher gathers that is not expressed in numbers.” They add “qualitative researchers are very interested in understanding the issues being researched from the perspective of the research participants. In other words you are trying to see through the eyes of the participant” (Struwig and Stead, 2001, p.12-13). Moreover, qualitative methods are interactive and allow in-depth data collection as advised in Patton (2002) “the researcher will be able to collect information, which is in depth and detailed by means of the qualitative methods” (Patton, 2002, p.14).

By utilizing qualitative methods, FGI, I will emphasize the participants’ perspective, description of events, and beliefs. Participants will expand on statements given and thereby provide a more thorough explanation. Thus, I will be able to understand much

better the different perspectives and generate accurate patterns and ideas for the study. This is again in line with Patton (2002), who emphasizes that qualitative methods produce a wealth of detailed information about a smaller number of people, although the ability to make generalizations is reduced. Qualitative methods also have the strength to generate a wealth of information. Patton compared them to a documentary explaining the designs as follows “a questionnaire is like a photograph” and “a qualitative study is like a documentary film. Both offer images” (Patton, 2002, p.54).

Qualitative data collection methods may include field notes, journals, interviews, photographs, recordings, videotapes, personal or official documents, and memos (Bogdan and Biklen 1982; Pring 2000; Richards 2003). In the current study I have decided to use interviews; according to Creswell, (2007) there are various forms of interview design that can be developed to obtain thick, rich data utilizing a qualitative investigational perspective (Creswell, 2007). I employed interviews in two different forms: 1) FGI, and 2) one-to-one interviews, and both forms were used for different purposes following different techniques.

1)The FGI followed an informal conversational interview outline as described by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003).This outline is generally used for the purpose of relying “...entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in a natural interaction, typically one that occurs as part of on-going participant observation field work” (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003, p. 239). The FGI has recently gained popularity amongst professionals in the educational research field, mainly for its ability to generate large amounts of data in a relatively short time. Creswell (2002) claims that the FGI is more likely to yield the best information when the group is highly cooperative and familiar with one another.

This strategy fitted well with my plan, because my aim was to familiarize myself with the participants in the FGI, discuss the general situation, explore the field, and therefore generate more specific topics and guidelines for the one-to-one in depth interviews.

I found the FGI extremely beneficial because of its flexible nature. However, the stage of analysis was not easy as noted in (Creswell, 2007). It was really difficult to code data; the process was long and exhausting. Consequently, I decided to go with a more structured format in the following stage.

2) The One-to-one interviews (or in-depth interviews as I interchangeably call them) followed the general interview guide approach; it is more structured than the informal conversational interview, although it is still quite flexible in its composition (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). This approach allowed me to have specific questions to guide the discussion, and to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee in line with McNamara (2009). However, I was able to change the order of questions accordingly, depending on the interview circumstances. McNamara, (2009) argued that interchanging the order of the questions in different interviews might affect consistency. This was because, when the participants are aware of the concept of flexibility, they might not answer consistently in line with the research questions.

According to Kvale (1996) interviews are a step towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans. Thus the social situatedness of research data would be more emphasised (Cohen et al., 2000). Interviews are inter-subjective because they allow participants, both interviewers and interviewees, to discuss their conceptions of the world from their different points of view (Laing, 1966; Baker and Johnson, 1998). Moreover, interviews can go deeply into the motivations, reasons and perspectives of respondents (Kerlinger, 1970).

Richards (2003) argues that a major benefit of the semi-structured interview is the possibility of gaining an emic view of participants' feelings and perceptions, while maintaining focus on the main research questions. I strongly agree with these views, and my current research has reinforced these perspectives. I conducted twelve semi-structured interviews with individuals with a range of experience levels; I interviewed veteran as well as novice teachers. It was a great opportunity to explore multiple

perspectives and discuss the issue with such a variety of individuals. This, definitely, granted me better understanding, and I learned a lot from their experiences.

Additionally, semi-structured interviews may include some predetermined questions, yet the order in which these are asked can be modified according to the interviewer's perception of what seems most appropriate (Robson, 2002). Therefore, I believe a semi-structured focus group interview and in depth interviews are ideally suited for this current research, which is aiming at exploring the complexity surrounding teachers' beliefs and behaviours within the context of actual teaching experience. Both types provide an important range of information while they illuminate the differences in perspective between groups of informants.

The following stage was to design interviews for implementation. According to Creswell (2007) interviews include (a) the preparation for the interview, (b) the constructing effective research questions, and (c) the actual implementation of the interview(s). The next section will give an overview on the process of creating the interview questions.

4.4.1.1. Creating interview elements

Creating effective research questions for the interview is a crucial component of the interview process, because the success of any study depends mainly on the design and on the effectiveness of the instruments used. Moreover, it is a sensitive stage because while investigating, researchers tap into the participants' experiences and I needed to be careful about wording my questions to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Therefore, caring about participants' feelings, attitudes, and views would help create a conducive atmosphere that would hopefully generate authentic data. To achieve this, I followed McNamara's (2009) recommendations for creating effective research questions for interviews, which include the following elements: (a) wording should be open-ended (respondents should be able to choose their own terms when answering questions); (b) questions should be as neutral as possible (avoid

wording that might influence answers, e.g., evocative, judgmental wording); (c) questions should be asked one at a time; (d) questions should be worded clearly (this includes knowing any terms particular to the program or the respondents' culture); and (e) be careful asking "why" questions. However, it is noteworthy that this theory alone *does not* ensure an effective instrument because practice is required to confirm the theory and piloting the instrument will prove its effectiveness or the contrary. And this was the case in the current study; I had to revisit the interview elements and improve what I thought did not work well in the pilot (See Appendices, 2, 3).

4.4.1.2. Interview protocol

Following suggestions made in (Creswell, 2002; Richards, 2003), interview protocols were created for both stages: FGI and one-to-one interviews. All the participants were informed of the study aim, and were guaranteed anonymity. Moreover, the informants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities as suggested in (Cohen, Manion, and Morisson, 2000).

The instrument used with teachers followed what Patton (2002) referred to as the 'interview guide' approach. In this approach, I listed the questions or the topics to be explored in an interview and used the list as a guide to "ensure that the same basic lines of inquiry are pursued with each person interviewed" (Patton, 2002, p. 343). I did not have to follow these questions one by one during the interview in any chronological order (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Rather, this interview guide provided the topic dimensions associated with TEFL approaches, current practices, and LP within which I was "free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject" (Patton, 2002, p. 343).

Firstly, the interview protocol for FGI with eight teachers (see Appendix 1) was divided into five dimensions: They were (1) demographic information about teachers' language learning experience, educational background, and teaching experience; (2) status quo

of TEFL in Tunisia (3) current professional development (4) the current LP of Tunisia (5) future insights: elements of a perfect TEFL environment.

Secondly, the one - to - one interview protocol with twelve teachers (see Appendix 2) was divided into eight dimensions. They were: (1) demographic information about teachers' language learning experience, educational background, and teaching experience; (2) clarity and appropriateness of TEFL approach; (3) clarity of current TEFL curriculum; (4) changes in TEFL policy; (5) professional development opportunities; (6) teacher training support received from governmental authorities; (7) current LP debate in Tunisia (8) aspirations for changes in TEFL and LP for better results.

4.4.2. Quantitative Research method: Survey

Despite the fact that in quantitative research the collected data is expressed in numbers, it is important to recognize the importance of the individuals who give life to these numbers. Struwig & Stead claim "with quantitative research individuals are utilized as the source of data; Surveys will be administered to individuals and the individuals' responses are required" (2001, p.6). Quantitative methods give the study a powerful statistical tool and give the researcher more confidence as numbers and figures grow to ensure validity.

According to Patton (2002) "the advantage of quantitative research is that a lot of people's reactions can be measured with a limited amount of questions and comparisons are thus possible, as well as statistical aggregation of the data" (Patton, 2002, p.14). Quantitative tools, for instance surveys, are time-saving. Researchers do not have to meet the participants or spend a lot of time asking questions and recording responses. The whole process is convenient to both participants and the researcher. Surveys are powerful tools; they are quantitative in design but could be qualitative in nature as they focus mainly on individuals in line with the interpretative/ constructivist

perspective. Therefore, my aim for this study is not to generalise the findings; rather I plan to use the data collected through surveys in correlation with the qualitative method in the data analysis process. Moreover, surveys are effective tools, they give a wider view and enabled me to study general trends in a larger sample and reach participants that you cannot logistically interview because of distance, time and availability.

4.4.2.1. Creating the survey elements

Creating the survey statement (See Appendix 4) followed the same principles used for creating interview questions (as explained earlier, on page 9 while discussing creating interview elements). Both methods followed McNamara's (2009) recommendations. However, for the survey I tried to be more generic, and develop items that do not need a great deal of reflection. I had to read through the literature and familiarize myself with studies in the field that deal with teachers' perceptions. Therefore, I used similar structures reflecting my study aims. I believe the research methods that were tried ensure better results.

4.4.2.2. Survey protocol

Following the principles of the interview protocol, as discussed earlier, I created a survey protocol to facilitate the survey procedure. The rationale is different from the interviews since both methods have different circumstances and settings. I did not meet the participants in the survey and I did not have the chance to clarify issues. Therefore, I thought a survey guide would present the study aim and further explain the process if needed. I also made sure of anonymity and requested participants' consent for using and sharing the data for research purposes. The survey protocol ended with a thank you note. Struwig & Stead stated "Quantitative research is more structured than qualitative research in that sampling, research design, questionnaires and statistical methods are largely determined prior to the participants completing questionnaires" (Struwig & Stead 2001, p.17).

The survey consisted of twenty two items, the protocol was divided into four major areas (1) demographic information about teacher's language learning experience, educational background, and teaching experience; (2) a 5-point scale questionnaire to indicate agreement or disagreement with the statements (Likert-scale is advised when the purpose is to assess a person's feelings about something). (3) The research aim (4) a consent form to be read and acknowledged by the participants. (See Appendix 6)

4.5. Ethical procedures

Special attention to ethical issues in qualitative research is an essential component of the research design (Christians, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000). The study was conducted with a genuine concern that it should, at all times, adhere to high ethical and academic standards. The study was conducted in a context where people feel more and more threatened every day because of political instability and social insecurity. This was perceived mainly through discussions with people and within the general atmosphere of the country at the time I was conducting the study. It was paramount that every respondent and interviewee felt that taking part in this study represented no threat to their personal and professional standing and well-being. Therefore, each distributed interview protocol or emailed survey had a University of Exeter ethics declaration (See Appendix 6) attached and the texts, either in emails or in hand-outs, stressing that a) participation was voluntary, b) participation was anonymous and, c) that participants could opt out at any time. All of which are procedures in keeping up with the code of practice as stated in Silverman, (2005) when he undertook to use pseudonyms "throughout the research to preserve anonymity and to safeguard confidentiality" (Silverman, 2005, p.30), amongst other precautions and ethical considerations. Through all the interviews pseudonyms were used, thus ensuring anonymity. Additionally, the interviewees were all given a preview of the interview questions. Putting participants' minds at rest regarding their anonymity and right of withdrawal, I believe encouraged them to voice their true and honest opinions with no concerns or fears.

In keeping with this goal, I followed established ethical research procedures through all steps of my research. Firstly, I submitted an ethical form to my supervisor at Exeter describing the study process and methodology, which he approved. Secondly, I asked for the informants' consent to participate in the study, and to allow the use of the data for research purposes, they all signed a consent form (see Appendix 6). As for the interview participants, I also made sure the teachers did not mind me recording the interviews in order to ensure their awareness of the formality of the task. As well, for the survey, I added a statement at the end of the form in order to ensure their awareness of the procedure, and ask for their permission to share the data for research purposes. I also guaranteed that all participants reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to. Almost all the participants willingly signed the form, but I had to discard those surveys that were not signed or when I could not reach the informant to get verbal approval.

4.6. Participants

The overall population of the study consisted of one hundred and twenty five participants (as summarized below in Figure 2 and for more information on the participants' background, see Appendices 7 and 8). All the participants belong to the TEFL field; the majority of the participants were teachers in one of the three different school levels where EFL is taught - primary, preparatory, and secondary - In addition to one teacher trainer for primary school teachers and one inspector for secondary education.

Methods	Nb. of participants	Female participants	Male participants
FGI	8	4	4
One to One interviews	12	6	6
Survey	105	60	45

Figure 2: Participants' information

The samples used through the different methods might *not* be representative of the overall population of educationalists across the system. However, (as explained earlier in the study) my intention was to gain a deeper understanding about the issue rather than generalise the findings. In the following section, I will describe the sampling procedures I used for each research method as they happened in a chronological order.

4.7. Sampling

As discussed in the previous section, the study involved three research methods employed in three consecutive stages. For each method I used a different strategy for selecting participants. For the qualitative component, I purposively selected participants for the one-to-one interviews (stage 2 in research methods) and then I invited eight of this group to the FGI (stage 1, and prior to the main research method). The rationale behind this idea was to involve teachers in deciding about the elements to be discussed in the one-to-one interviews as well as for the survey's major themes. Whereas, for the quantitative tool - the survey - the selection was random and depended mainly on the availability of volunteers as well as on the efforts of my direct contacts to invite teachers in order to contribute to the study.

The following section presents more details about the sampling process conducted for each stage; a) in depth interviews, b) FGI, and c) the survey and ends with an overview on the measures taken to ensure validity and reliability checks in each research method.

4.7.1. Sampling for in depth interviews

The sampling for this method started prior to my arrival to Tunisia and continued during my stay in the country. I first contacted my immediate contacts via telephone and social networks and invited them to recommend teachers who might be interested in my study and requested their contact information. Then, from that list, I made phone calls, contacted teachers via Facebook or approached teachers directly. Later, I was invited to a teachers' gathering designed to discuss the structure of a new teachers' association "TATE", which is now functional in the city of Sfax, Tunisia. It was a great opportunity to meet teachers face to face, and I eventually decided upon twelve of these teachers as my participants for this study method.

The participants in the one to one interviews were given pseudonyms; Ines, Ali, Sami, Aziz, Nadia, Amine, Yasmine, Rym, Yasser, Slim, Lina, and Sana. The sample was purposive (Patton, 2002) with a *Maximum Variation*; purposefully picking a wide range of variation on dimensions of interest. It consisted of the twelve teachers - six male teachers and six female ones - The sample was also a blend of veteran senior teachers and novice young teachers. The intention was to ensure that the selected teachers could provide "information-rich" cases with respect to the purpose of the study. I expected them to have a sound knowledge and a deep understanding of TEFL in Tunisia from different perspectives within the variety of their own experiences and contexts. The following table presents an overview on the participants' academic backgrounds and work experience.

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Qualification	Experience	Additional information
Ali	M	54	BA	28	Senior teacher in secondary schools
Aziz	M	48	BA	20	Inspector for secondary teachers
Ines	F	50	Masters	24	Teacher trainer for primary schools English teachers, originally English teacher
Nadia	F	26	BA	1	Newly recruited preparatory teacher, on probation
Sami	M	30	BA	3	Secondary level teacher, still on probation
Sana	F	34	BA	10	Taught in prep and now is in secondary schools
Lina	F	44	Diploma	18	Primary level teacher, initially a French teacher
Slim	M	42	Diploma	16	Primary level teacher, initially an Arabic teacher
Yasser	M	28	BA	4	Secondary level teacher
Amine	M	26	Masters	18	Senior teacher in preparatory school
Rym	F	32	Diploma + IMEF	6	Primary level teacher
Yasmine	F	28	Doctoral student	2	Taught in secondary school as adjunct but now is pursuing doctoral studies

Figure 3: Participants' academic information

4.7.2. Sampling for the FGI

The second step in sampling was for the FGI. The FGI was conducted prior to interviews in the research methods process, but the sampling procedure was different. Firstly, I selected the participants for the interviews, and the second round of selection was for the FGI. This was intentional because my plan for the FGI involved generating ideas and topics of interest for the informants of the interviews, which is the main research method, in order to cross-check the interview elements. I involved the participants in suggesting the topics they believed were important and needed to be discussed in the interviews. After that, I decided to invite eight teachers to an informal gathering prior to the scheduled in depth interviews with a view of familiarizing ourselves with each other and deciding on the process of the interviews. The informants kindly agreed with the principle. They all thought it was a good idea to pave the way for in depth-interviews, and agreed on a common ground for the following stage.

While selecting the teachers to participate in the FGI, I followed Krueger and Casey's (2000) advice stating that FGI should include between six and eight participants and that smaller groups show greater potential. I thought eight informants would be a manageable group, and would help me gain a variety of perspectives. Consequently, I selected eight participants from the list I made for the one to one interview. I tried to have representatives for all teaching levels, educational qualifications, years of experience, and gender. The informants had been working together in the same educational zone for years, and were used to speaking together as well as discussing issues of interest in general meetings with inspectors or teacher trainers. I anticipated that such an interview would generate the best results. This is in line with Creswell (2002) stating that a culture-sharing group is defined as one that has been interacting on a regular basis for some time has developed shared ways of thinking and talking, and that is representative of a larger group.

Therefore, the FGI involved the first eight participants stated in Figure 3, who I thought would generate rich data due to the variety of perspectives, experience and affiliation.

4.7.3. Sampling for the survey

The last stage in sampling concerns the survey. At this particular stage I did not try to be selective as much as I tried to involve as many teachers as possible. Firstly, I gave hard copies to all the teachers I met, and asked them to invite more colleagues to participate in the study. Secondly, I sent the survey via email to all my contacts and asked them to forward it to their contacts in the field. Lastly, I shared it on the social network. Facebook, where many teachers usually meet to discuss issues and share updates, and I invited the social network affiliates to respond to the survey with a view to collecting rich data and getting more insights for the study.

4.8. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important factors for effective research because invalid research is worthless as advised by Cohen and his colleagues (2000). Reliability is generally construed as consistency and replicability. Cohen et al., (2000) suggest that “reliability is a necessary but insufficient condition for validity in research; reliability is a necessary precondition of validity” (Cohen et al., 2000, p.105). According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), in qualitative research reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, i.e. a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage. Reliability in quantitative research depends on instrument construction. Whereas, in qualitative research “the researcher is the instrument” (Patton, 2002, p. 14). Moreover, Patton (2002) supports the notion of the researcher's involvement and immersion into the research by discussing that the real world is subject to change and therefore, a qualitative researcher should be present during the changes to record an event before and after the change occurs.

I used mixed-methods in the current study - survey, interviews, and FGI - therefore I took a few pilot measures to ensure validity and reliability across the research methods. Firstly, I checked the questions and the statements across the tools several times to make sure they prompted the types of responses I expected. Secondly, I ran a pilot with a small group of people from the target population; however I made sure that these participants were not involved in the study. Thirdly, for the survey I deliberately placed opposing statements one after the other (as a validity check), allowing for a reasonable degree of certainty, regarding these divergent viewpoints, where both items (4 and 5 respectively) indicated a statistically significant difference of opinions.

However, it is worth mentioning that while conducting attitude and perception research there is always a major issue of validity and reliability of the research instruments and the subsequent results. Therefore, I remained all the time aware that wider extrapolation would be of limited validity.

4.9. Pilot Study

Prior to the actual interviews, I implemented a pilot study. The aim was to try the research tool in order to determine weaknesses and limitations and identify flaws within the interview design. This stage is deemed very important by scholars, as it allows the researcher to make necessary revisions prior to the implementation of the study in line with (Kvale, 2007). I conducted the pilot with two Tunisian teachers (See Appendix 3) 1) with Lamia, a friend of mine who worked with me in the same school in Tunisia back in the nineties. It took place in the winter holidays when I travelled to Tunisia to collect a few documents and visit the field. 2) With another colleague from my contacts, Anis. They both have similar interests as the participants of the actual study. I conducted the pilot with a view to testing various interview dimensions; for instance, the general understanding of the study purpose, the interview elements, the questions, and the time set for the task and the overall flow of the interview. The pilot was indeed very

helpful; it served as a rich source of information for the study background on the one hand, and assisted me with the refinement of research questions, interview element and approach to interviews on the other.

Task	Number of participants	Female Participants	Male Participants
Pilot	2	1	1

Figure 4: Pilot Interview Participants' information

In the pilot, I followed the standardized open-ended interview method as outlined in (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). It is called open-ended but I had the impression it *never ends*. This was true for both stages, while conducting the interview and while transcribing the data. The density of the data and the off-topic details did not make coding an easy process. But this method was extensive because the interview took much longer than expected and I think I lost control over the task at different stages. This experience helped me rethink of the method to use for the actual interviews, reformulate my questions to avoid redundancy, and study better the timing allocated to each stage. I believe the pilot helped me review the study design as well as improve my interview skills.

Following the same principles, I piloted the survey before publishing it on Facebook and received feedback from my colleagues about the smoothness of the application. I did not have to change any statements; however, I had to further explain in the cover letter the way the survey would operate.

4.10. Data Collection Procedures

As discussed earlier, I employed a mixed-method approach, which allowed a wide range of data to be gathered and interpreted. In the following section I will describe the procedures of three stages of data collection 1) FGI, 2) survey and 3) in depth interviews as they actually happened.

4.10.1. Phase 1: FGI

The first phase comprised a FGI; as explained in the participants' section. I invited eight participants to an informal meeting, which was conducted in English. I clearly stated it would be a pre-interview stage event. Firstly, I explained the rationale behind the study and discussed the purpose of the current research, and then I gave the floor to the participants who were free to discuss the aim of the study, and raise issues within the framework of the topic they believed were important to the research. I further explained this stage would enlighten my perspective, and help me design more accurate interview items to better suit their needs.

On the set date and place – the CREFOC (*Centre Regional De L'education et de la Formation, Continue*), Sfax - the entire group showed up on time ready to discuss the FGI items. Firstly, I distributed the interview protocol form among the participants, and made sure they were aware of the formality of the task. They all agreed on recording the interview and signed a consent form of no objection to using the information for research purposes. However, they had the right to change their minds at later stages, and I promised to share the data with those who were interested before disseminating the results.

Secondly, we started the task and the recording. In the beginning, I read the questions and told them to feel free to start with any suggested topic or to raise new ones. All the participants agreed to go through the headlines I traced for practical reasons. The

interview took seventy five minutes, although I planned for one hour (see Appendix 5). But the participants did not mind extending the timing as they were very engaged in discussions and found the topic worth investigating.

Finally, I left the room with many great ideas, and more structured views for editing and finalizing the in depth interviews. This stage was illuminating to both the researcher and the participants alike. It helped in shaping the next study stage and granted the informants more confidence and willingness to participate in the interviews. They had a sense of belonging to the study because of the suggestions and recommendations they made throughout.

The FGI helped me achieve the immediate aim of the design, which was: to generate data, understand meanings, and explore beliefs and cultures that affect individuals' feelings, attitudes and behaviours. This, as explained earlier, is in line with Richards (2003).

4.10.2. Phase 2: Survey

The second phase of the study was quantitative in nature; it comprised a survey that was circulated among my colleagues in three different methods; 1) by hand, 2) via electronic mail, and 3) via Facebook. I gave and sent the survey to my immediate contacts, and I asked them to share it with all the EFL teachers in their circles. I highlighted the fact that my aim in this stage was to involve as many participants as possible in order to grasp a clearer view. I also pointed out that a variety of experience, gender, and level of teaching would be very helpful and would enlighten my study.

For the first method, by hand, I gave each teacher ten hard copies of the survey with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study. I also handed ten stamped envelopes with my local address in Tunisia for them to send the responses back. I handed sixty copies and I received forty two back. However, I had to discard four of them as the

consent of approval to disseminate the data for research purposes was not signed. This method was very efficient because it was anonymous. I did not have a clue as to who the participants were for that phase. For instance, I could not resend notes or reminders for those who did not submit. I only relied on the data provided in the demographic section information. However, it was slow. I had to wait for more than three months to collect the feedback.

The second method was much faster. Emails were circulated in a very short time compared to the previous method. I was also able to track emails, re send the survey for those who took longer to reply, and send thank you notes to those who replied. Moreover, I was able to clarify a few elements in the survey as requested by three participants. It was a kind of correspondence between us, and we exchanged concerns and clarified views. I also resent the survey back seeking consent signatures for those who forgot to do so. I had even taken notes of that communication for further consideration. This method was very convenient and practical; though it lacked the element of anonymity. This method resulted in forty responses to consider.

Similarly, the last method in surveying - via Facebook - was very handy and quick, it had an additional element as well, which was the ability to analyse and track responses on line. I used the 'survey monkey' application (as shown below in Figure 5). In the start, I created a group on my Facebook page, entitled "TEFL Teachers in Tunisia", and I invited all teachers to join and to invite more teachers from their contacts. I published the cover letter on this page in order to explain the study aim and the survey procedure. Signing the consent for this method took a different form, I asked the participants to read the cover letter and understand it fully. And then, if they agreed on the study principles, accepted contributing to the research, and did not object to share the results, they completed the survey. Otherwise, they should have refrained and not have conducted the online survey. Therefore, I assumed all participants who took part in the survey totally agreed with disseminating the data for research purpose. I received twenty seven responses in this phase, which made the total number of responses to the survey through the three different methods one hundred and five. This method was

convenient; however, I would have appreciated it if I had been able to include a digital signature or a preliminary step that requests signing the consent before moving to the survey. It is worth mentioning that this is my first time using this application for research purposes, and my knowledge in that area could be improved.



Figure 5: Survey Monkey application

4.10.3. Phase 3: in depth Interviews

For this data collection method, I met with the participants following the interview schedules (see Appendix 5) and we conducted the tasks, fortunately they were all accurate and I did not have to reschedule or cancel any.

To address ethical matters, the purpose of the study was reiterated, participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, and they were promised the opportunity to review the interview transcripts if needed. While the interview protocol provided a common framework for addressing the overall research questions, participants were permitted to express ideas and opinions beyond the bounds of the questions asked. The interviews, which were audio-recorded, began with general questions, and then continued with additional questions to expand the study and to seek further details when needed. During the process of interviewing I was very flexible and let the interviews flow in a natural manner. This is consistent with Robson's views which state wording can be changed and explanations given. Questions that may seem inappropriate with a particular interviewee could be omitted, or additional ones included (Robson, 2002). This approach served to reach a broader understanding of the TEFL situation in Tunisia as well as the status quo of LP.

This stage concluded with a *validity check*. I tried each time to recapitulate, summarize and explain what was said in order to get confirmation or clarification on the issue. Such a technique was very helpful, and spared me a lot of time and effort as well as avoiding misinterpretation. While transcribing, the segments called *validity check* were very helpful and summed up lots of details.

4.11. Data Analysis

The Data Analysis followed Creswell's (2007) guidelines on how to compile the data into sections or groups of information, also known as themes or codes. These themes or codes are consistent phrases, expressions, or ideas that were common among research participants (Kvale, 2007). Yin (2009) pointed out that data analysis consists of a number of stages, i.e. examining, categorizing and tabulating or otherwise recombining the evidence, in order to address the initial goal of a study.

The goal of qualitative data analysis is to uncover emerging themes, patterns, concepts, insights, and understandings (Patton, 2002). Qualitative studies often use an analytic framework, a network of linked concepts and classifications, to understand an underlying process; that is, a sequence of events or constructs and how they relate.

The very first step in data analysis was conducted even before engaging in collecting data from in depth interviews and surveys. Following the exploratory study design, data emerging from FGI would illuminate the subsequent research tools. Therefore, after conducting the first method, I immediately analysed the data that emerged following the guidelines stated above. I listened to their recordings several times, which was seventy five minutes in length, and I read the notes I took during the task. The purpose of analysing the FGI at an early stage was to identify major topics of interest in order to include them in the interview items. I tabulated the data and represented the results into charts so as to read them better; so the picture of the participants' concerns and interests became clearer in my mind. This stage guided me in editing and customizing the interview items in the light of the new data.

Drawing on the analysis of the data provided in FGI, a survey was constructed, the purpose of this tool was to gain a clearer picture from a larger population, to construct meaning, and to identify patterns rather than to have a statistical check. The data was read across, tabulated, and used to cross check the data collected in the in depth interviews.

The aim of the in-depth interviews was to engage study participants in a reflective dialogue with the researcher (Creswell, 2002; Richards, 2003). I collected twelve recordings in this stage. The recordings varied in length; from fifteen to forty five minutes in length. I listened to the recordings several times, and identified the major categories and subcategories that emerged. Following the Krueger and Casey (2000) concept, I went back to the purpose of the study to manage the information and make sense of the data. I discarded irrelevant information such as personal stories. And then, I carefully transcribed the relevant parts bearing in mind that the process of qualitative analysis aims to bring meaning to a situation rather than the search for truth. It was a lengthy process, and very exhausting.

Moreover, given my familiarity with the context, institution and teachers under scrutiny, I sought to minimize the impact of my views on the analysis of the data. Therefore, I attempted to use a “strategic and technical detachment” approach to both data collection and analysis (Holliday, 2001, p. 178). To avoid imposing my views on the data, I analysed it using exploratory content analysis. I categorized and codified the emerging themes and then compared them with the whole set of data using a constant comparison method that included reading and rereading within and across the responses of the participants (Lalik and Potts, 2001). I revisited the data several times after initial categorisations, I collapsed some categories because they were thematically related, for instance, for TEFL status, in the beginning I had four categories, 1) TEFL approaches, 2) Teaching resources, 3) professional development and 4) Facilities, but later on I noticed a lot of redundancy in the data analysis, thus I decided to collapse the fourth and the second category in order to avoid repetition. Moreover, I felt that some categories are not of equal weight, and should be revisited; I had to listen again to transcripts for gap filling. Eventually, the chart reached its final shape as shown below in Figure 6.

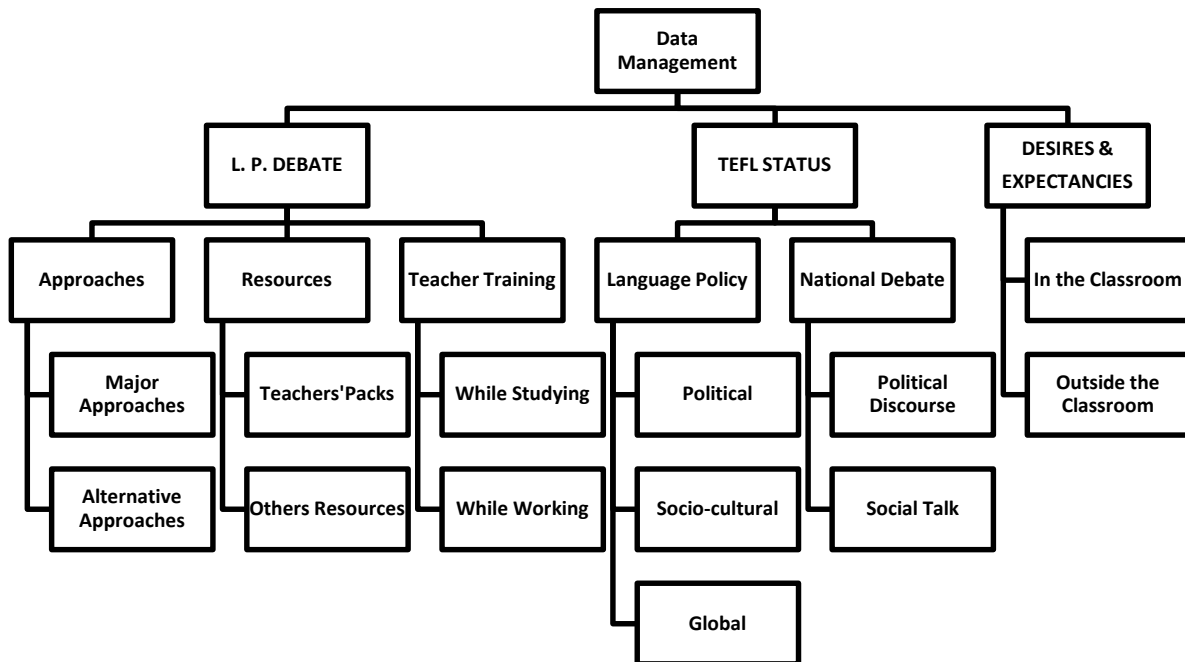


Figure 6: Data management chart

The methodology I used for data analysis is emergent (inductive), it consists of the interplay between data analysis - coding, retrieval, sorting, and other types of pattern seeking - and developing interpretation known as constant comparison, as stated earlier. This strategy helped me gradually build a structure for understanding my findings. I constantly compared a construction of my understanding against data. I checked each new finding against other sources of data for possible explanations until a point of saturation is reached, thus completing the analysis. At the end, two participants and one colleague read the analysis to validate the themes that emerged.

In conclusion, Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe the analysis phase as ‘the interplay between researchers and data’, acknowledging that there is an extent of subjective selection and interpretation of the generated data. It is important to note here that I do not claim to be an objective observer in this study; so my aim is to honestly represent both the world of the participants and my own world. That is in line with the Vygotskian combination, of individual and social meaning making, which will provide a framework to consider better the effectiveness of the current study.

4.12. Reliability and Validity: Trustworthiness

The validity of qualitative research is often referred to as trustworthiness or credibility. These are established with compelling evidence and enhanced by emergent methodology. Data trustworthiness, whether collected from direct observations, focus groups, or interviews, is evidenced by the following criteria: transferability, dependability, conformability, and credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Similarly, Merriam (2009) argued that qualitative researchers agree on strategies that promote trustworthiness in a study. These procedures include: multiple sources of data as evidence, member checks, saturation, peer review, or consultation with experts, providing rich detail of the context of the study, plausible alternatives.

The following section reports the measures I took and the provision I made in order to ensure trustworthiness and address the criteria mentioned above.

Firstly, for credibility I used appropriate, well recognised research methods (survey and interviews), I developed an early familiarity with the culture of participants, and then I used purposive sampling to ensure rich case data. Moreover, inherent in the mixed methods design used for the current study, as claimed in Creswell & Clark (2007), I relied on the *triangulation aspect* along with the emergent methodology, to provide direct comparison of both types of data - qualitative (interviews) and quantitative

(survey) - Eventually; the statistical findings complemented the qualitative evidence. I did not forget as well to enhance trust and ensure honesty in informants in addition to involving my peers in reviewing constructs and approving conclusions. At the end of this, I examined previous research to check and frame findings.

Secondly, to ensure transferability, I made provision of background data to establish context of study and detailed description of phenomenon in question to allow comparisons to be made, I checked every stage to ensure that my research was reliable. And I made sure recurrent categories in the analysis emerged from the data consistently.

For the third criterion; dependability I believe the in-depth methodological description I provided allows my study to be repeated and obtain similar results. The In-depth methodological description also allows integrity of research results to be scrutinized and this asserts the fourth criterion of trustworthiness; which is conformability. It is also worth mentioning again the approach I followed in data collection and analysis; the “strategic and technical detachment” in line with (Holliday, 2001, p. 178), ensured credible conclusions accompanied with strong evidence, valid data, and clear logic as noted by my peers and colleagues who read my findings. This comes in addition to my recognition of the shortcomings in study’s methods and their potential effects.

4.13. Challenges and Limitations

While designing the study and planning for operational strategies, I was concerned about the feasibility of the process. Being physically away from the study field - Tunisia - and having to deal from distance with people I never met was a huge hurdle. I wondered at different stances whether I made the right choice when I decided on the topic for my thesis.

At the beginning the scope of the study seemed to me extensive and the population hard to reach. However, I believe being aware from the start with such obstacles made me plan accurately and avoid any unforeseen constraints.

Once the study was underway the main challenges were largely predictable ones: e.g. not everyone invited to respond to the quantitative survey did so, certain respondents took a long time to respond and a few failed to complete the survey. However, as these challenges were somewhat predictable in advance the design of the study I was able to take these into account.

In addition, the initial scope of interviews seemed very small to me when thinking about the validity of the tool, but the final compromise and access to teachers' opinions through surveys, as well as the cooperation of interviewees, may have altered the original conception and helped me to focus more strategically. Researching teachers' attitudes to TEFL conversations has been very illuminating in this particular context and cultural milieu; unfettered access to a smaller, more targeted, group of respondents may well have allowed for a far deeper, and richer, exploration of the opinions and beliefs of experienced teachers.

Like any exploratory study, the current one is a great tool for investigating and familiarizing with the situation in Tunisia. However, they do not often present satisfactory answers to research questions, although they can suggest guidelines for further research methods, which could provide definitive answers.

The following chapter discusses the data analysis process and the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS.

Introduction

In this chapter, I will describe and interpret the data collected throughout the three research tools, the FGI, survey, and one to one interviews. The overall survey results are tabulated for reference (See Appendix 14), I also provided a sample of the categorised transcripts is also provided (See Appendix 15).

In (5.1), The Status Quo of TEFL, I will describe the data that emerged from the research tools deemed relevant to the following research question: What do EFL teachers in Tunisia think of the current approaches to TEFL?

In (5.2), The LP Status Quo And The National Debate - State of The Art, I will reveal the data that emerged from the research tools which were deemed appropriate to the following research question, What are the main elements of the current national debate about the projected LP in Tunisia?

In (5.3), The Desired TEFL State of Affairs, I will cover teachers' wishes and anticipation for the future of TEFL in the country, and the ultimate projected LP that would create such a situation.

5.1. The Status Quo of TEFL

The interview items, as well as the survey elements related to exploring TEFL approaches in use in Tunisia, revealed rich data which I decided to classify into three main themes: I- TEFL approaches, II- Teaching Resources, and III- Professional Development. After that, and for practical reasons, I sorted the information related to each main theme into sub-themes in order to manage them easily and scrutinize the collected data and attain useful conclusions.

In the following part I, I will investigate and report the information related to TEFL approaches followed in schools, along with the participants' views about current practices in the field.

5.1.1. TEFL Approaches

While asking the teachers about the current approaches to TEFL in Tunisian schools, I found it was necessary to encompass all the education levels where English is taught nowadays; which were the primary, preparatory and secondary levels. Although I was planning to explore the upper levels, I thought it would be inappropriate to leave the primary level out since it was mentioned and advised to be explored in the first research tool, which was the FGI.

In an attempt to discover the different approaches used in teaching English in Tunisian schools in the last two decades, I asked the participants about TEFL approaches in use in the country at that time. The responses were varied, and the data collected was rich and unconstrained. This is in line with Richards and Schmidt (2002), who think that different methods of language teaching result from different views. Most of the interviewees agreed on the following chronological sequence in describing how they coped with the changes they went through and the reforms that were enacted by the Ministry of Education. Firstly, there was the "old days" approach. Secondly, they switched to the "new" approach. Lastly, they moved to the "pick and choose" approach.

I will describe and interpret the participants' views about these three main approaches to TEFL as they were used in Tunisia. For organizational and practical reasons, I will set the chronological arrangement suggested by the participants. However, this is not the order they appeared in all the transcripts because some participants started with the latest approach in the educational field. I tried to organize the sub-themes in order to understand the data and get the right connections between the different interviews. Therefore, I will start with views concerning the "old days" approach, which was mentioned by most participants, even though they had controversial views about it.

5.1.1.1. The "Old Days" Approach:

"The way we learned engraved the English words in our minds."

Teachers, who had been in the field for more than twenty years, were keen on mentioning the audio-lingual approach to TEFL and the changes they went through during their careers. Ali for instance who had been teaching for twenty eight years recalled the "old days" teaching approach as he described it. "Teachers were highly effective in class" he said "we used to model, act, and mime. The students loved it, they never missed an occasion to express their happiness, they learned quickly and their outcomes were the best proofs. They did not only speak English, but they memorized every single word for years." From my experience interviewing the teachers, many teachers share Ali's point of view and his impression about students' attitude to EFL. For instance, expressions such as *loved, used to like, the level of the students was much better*, were frequently used through the interviews. However, I could not find any study that was conducted in Tunisia from that time to investigate teachers' impressions or students' feedback. Such an assumption is taken for granted in the field through daily practices and teachers expertise.

Younger teachers, on the other hand, who joined the field a few years later than Ali, discussed more how they were taught through the audio-lingual approach and

compared their own learning experiences to their students'. The majority of answers to the question about the approaches to TEFL in the recent past revolved around the audio-lingual approach, and mostly the technique of "drilling". There seemed to be a consensus about the success of drilling in teaching English. Aziz, for instance, stated "I still remember how my English teacher used to teach us new words. We used to repeat the word ten times until we learned it by heart." He then asked "what is wrong with our English? We learned well, and we still remember the words as well as the way we learned them." Aziz seemed to appreciate the way he learned when he was young; he did not praise the current approaches in the field. He kept talking about his own learning experience and sounded a bit cynical about current ones. He added "the way we learned engraved the English words in our minds." Aziz thought that learning approaches currently are extremely "light" in that they do not leave "obvious traces of learning." He even compared them to "disposables" and said "teachers and students focus on the claimed new techniques and forget about the core subject." A few other teachers agreed with Aziz; they thought there was a mistaken idea about the audio-lingual method. Aziz added "teachers (in the 80's) were exceptionally creative, and engaged the classes in conversations and discussions, we were extremely active. We used to have exceedingly high cognitive level." Unfortunately, I could not find any study from this period conducted in the field about teaching approaches in the seventies or eighties and their effects on the students. However, a few teachers through interviews confirmed Aziz's claim. Although, Aziz and his colleagues claimed to be describing the audio-lingual method while recalling the situation in the eighties they mentioned a number of techniques that could be described as belonging to the communicative approach. This might be because the audio-lingual method was the official method at that time, however a few practitioners did not subscribe to it. I believe, this is good ground for further research, which should be investigated in the near future in order to make full use of the experiences of people who taught Aziz and his generation.

When I asked the teachers about additional techniques borrowed from the audio-lingual approach in teaching nowadays, I did not receive any specific examples. Most of the teachers did not identify any strategy or present definite answers to my question.

However, they agreed with Ines who coined the audio-lingual method as an “outdated” one, and started eliciting the advantages of the “new” method as termed by a few teachers.

The very first impression I got was a misunderstanding about the inefficacy of the audio-lingual method in English classes. Most of the participants believed the audio-lingual method is of no benefit to the students because it is based on “parroting and drilling,” which is not real communication. On the other hand, most of the participants also believed that students in the last decades, where the audio-lingual method was the approved method in school, were much more focused and proficient in English than those who studied through the communicative approach.

Therefore if, the communicative method is believed to be more effective in TEFL, why would the students be less proficient? This seems to be a contentious issue and needs more in depth analysis from the teachers’ point of view in order to confirm or deny the inefficacy of the audio-lingual method. Therefore, I explicitly asked the teachers to further explain their claims, but the explanations they provided in the interviews were still limited and needed more substance to be considered convincing. In order to dig deeper, I asked five participants whether they could recall specific situations - they believed were unsuccessful - while teaching particular skills through the audio-lingual method. But none of the informants provided specific examples, they all gave generic answers and kept talking around the questions. Sana, who taught both primary and secondary school, said “drilling in all skills is a failure,” and Yasser added “all the techniques of the audio-lingual method are not effective in class,” whereas Nadia, a novice teacher, stated “while teaching grammar, audio-lingual techniques such as...well...I don’t know all of them....are not good, we need communicative grammar.”

Moreover, the survey results showed that views about the efficiency of the current system to TEFL in classes (Item 7) are varied. Indeed, only fifty teachers out of one hundred and five agreed that TEFL strategy was successful, whereas, the remaining

fifty five respondents thought it was not, which shows the diversity of views and that generalisation is not appropriate in this case.

		strongly agree/ agree	strongly disagree/ disagree
7	The current approach to TEFL classes is successful	50	55

Figure 7: Interview item 7

5.1.1.2. The “New” Approach:

“Communication is the heart of English classes.”

Novice teachers, as well as those who have less than ten years of experience have recorded a different view about the audio-lingual method. Yasmine called it “old” as contrasting to the “new” communicative approaches she contended “it is an outdated method, and presently we tend to appreciate more the new approach rather than the audio-lingual one.” They seemed to agree that “communication” is key to learning languages, and that new teaching trends reject the frontal teaching and work on reducing Teacher Talking Time (TTT). Nadia, a newly recruited teacher expressed her positive attitude to the communicative approach and tried to identify the principles underlying this approach to life, freedom, human rights and openness. She praised the techniques of the communicative approach saying “they give vitality to the class” [sic]. Most of the participants who support this approach believe that the communicative approach provides “genuine” learning contexts, which are closer to real life, and claimed that this is what language learning, should be about. Yasser, for example, said “communication is the heart of English classes.”

I had the impression that the teachers, who were very enthusiastic about this approach, had their own reasons. For instance, it has been brought to my attention that Nadia had recently attended a workshop in an international conference “Nile TESOL 2011, Cairo” on the communicative approach presented by Elizabeth Hepford. Nadia said

that she was very enthusiastic about the approach and was looking for opportunities to share the knowledge she gained from the conference, as well as employ the techniques she learned in her classes.

Nevertheless, other teachers were dissatisfied or indifferent towards using CLT. For example, Ali, a veteran teacher, said “are you sure that teachers today like the communicative approach? And how can you guarantee they are using this approach in class?” I had a strong feeling while listening to the teachers describe their perceptions that there was some confusion amongst teachers about methods and techniques related to different approaches in use. He added “there seems to be a discrepancy between theory and practice, teachers tend to name techniques but not to use them.” This suggests that there was little consensus or agreement in views about the so called “new approach.” A few teachers also confirmed that very little help and training was given to the teachers about the communicative approach and the way it should be employed. Nadia said “they introduced the communicative approach to the teachers, and then told them to use it.” When asked about the principles of the approach Nadia added “...they all depend on teachers’ readings and understanding, the key word is *communication*... [laughing]...BUT the real problem is communication.” I believe this attitude reflects the complexity of the issue and diversity of opinions; teachers had different views and interpretations of the approach. The lack of consistency seemed to emerge as a focal point here, which definitely means an urgent need to address this issue and ensure consistency at the level of understanding the terminology in the field for instance, theories, principles, and approaches in ELT.

However, all the teachers with no exception, from fresh graduates to those who have a long experience in the field, agreed that nowadays an entirely different approach is being used. This approach was chosen by the Ministry of Education across the different levels of teaching. When I asked them about the name and techniques of the current approach, I recorded different names “the pick and choose” approach, the “no” approach, and the “liberal” approach as Ali called it. They all referred to an eclectic

approach, which means “select what appears to be best in various doctrines, methods, or styles” (as defined in Merriam-Webster dictionary).

Similarly, in the pilot interviews, I asked the teachers involved in that stage about methods applied in teaching English at different levels; primary, preparatory, and secondary schools, they all answered that they are *eclectic* and do not follow a specific method. They claimed that they choose appropriate techniques to their context, and applied procedures from different methods as they see fit. Lamia said “teachers follow broad principles of the CLT but do not subscribe to a particular method.” she then added “they borrow some techniques from audio-lingual methods as well, but do not want to admit the success of this method in teaching.” Even so, this stage in the study was premature; the same answers were noted in the actual interviews conducted at a later stage.

Moreover, a few participants noted that the ministry of education tends to change programs abruptly, curricula, and approaches without consulting teachers in the field. Sami said “in the last decade we had to change the books three times with no prior notice.” Rym added “we always expect change, we do not want to do extra work or research... it is a waste of time because things will change!” This idea, which was brought up by the teachers in the interviews, was also confirmed by the survey results as shown below. Indeed, seventy six percent of the respondents (eighty teachers out of one hundred and five) do not favour changes as shown in the table below:

		Strongly Agree/ agree	strongly disagree/ disagree
13	Teachers are resistant to educational changes in Tunisia	80	25

Figure 8: Interview item 13

I think we have a particular situation here; it is not a traditional case of teachers' resistance to change, as discussed in (Fullan, 2001; Thomas Guskey's, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Teachers in this case do not object to changes, and they do not claim that traditional teaching methods would always be more efficient. This is rather a reflection upon constant change. Teachers expressed their apprehension to continuous changes from the part of the ministry of education whether they see the reasons as good or not. Thus, teachers need some stability in curricula and approaches in order to devote more effort and reach better results as they clearly stated in the interviews.

5.1.1.3. The “Pick and Choose” Approach:

“We take (“الزبدة”) the butter from each approach” [sic]

A recurrent response of the teachers to the question about TEFL approaches in use currently in the Tunisian schools was “We do not have a specific approach.” Most teachers seemed to agree that they do *not* follow one particular approach. According to them, the new trend in teaching is to “pick and choose” as described by Sami. He contended “we use multiple approaches, but we do not designate a specific one.” A few teachers agreed with Sami, claiming to be selective when planning lessons. Sana for instance said, “from each approach we choose the techniques that we see right to the context and to the students.” This is in line with Nunan (1989) who referred to these methods as *designer methods*, as they were tailored methods in order to suit different contexts.

In order to achieve a deeper insight about the understandings of teachers with the pick and choose approach, I asked follow up questions about examples of techniques they use in their daily classes and the approaches they subscribe to. The common response revolved around mixing and matching approaches, Amine for example said “we consider the best of the audio-lingual and mix it with the best of the communicative approach.” The teachers have also stressed the elements of freedom and adaptability in this approach. Sana added “in our context, there is a shortage in resources, this

approach is flexible and allows adaptability. But *we cope with what we have*" (This issue is further discussed in section 5.1.1.2 - Other Resources).

Ines, who is also a primary level teacher trainer, believes that the current eclectic approach to TEFL is "successful and pleasant." She believes it creates lots of fun in class and helps the primary level students play while learning. She added "techniques such as role play and group work, create a positive environment in the classroom and help students comprehend the information." However, Sami along with three other teachers had a different point of view. They all indicated that they thought that these techniques were time consuming and distracting. Sami said "the teacher spends a lot of time organising the activities and managing the class rather than focusing on the content." He contended that such activities required different settings and specific preparations. I had a feeling that this latter view was the result of undesirable conditions, and I enquired about the reasons behind this stance. The participants mentioned poor conditions and a limited milieu for these "borrowed strategies" as Sami called them. He added "the poor conditions in our classes do not help us achieve the advised techniques."

Ali went on to say "the classes are very big. How can this be possible with forty students?" They also talked about the facilities in classrooms, with Sami saying "the tables are very heavy and old- fashioned, and we do not dare move them in order to meet class dynamics." Ali added "how can we talk about group work or pair work when there is no room for moving in the classroom?" The teachers agreed that most of the classrooms are small-sized and over-crowded; they do not have the luxury of changing the settings, and creating the right atmosphere for group dynamics. Additionally, the teachers complained about the absence of significant budgets to support even small projects. As Ines stated, "we do not have specific budgets for projects; if I need photocopies I have to make them outside the schools at my own expense, or ask the students to contribute. Sometimes I find this uncomfortable, we read about lamination, flash cards, posters in books; this is a luxury that we cannot afford." Almost all the

teachers in the study agreed that schools cannot afford to support teaching aids due to budget constraints.

The question now was: If the main constituents of an approach go missing, how could the approach be adapted? Sami added “you are asking about the approach we subscribe to, don’t we need to have all the strategies covered in order to say we follow a certain approach?” Four more teachers agreed with Sami and said that they follow the communicative approach. However, they did not follow its main themes. This is in line with Kumaravadivelu (1994) who suggests *the postmethod condition*, wherein he argues that the dissatisfaction with the conventional concept of method should be fixed by multiple choice rather than a single set of procedures. The teachers were thus constrained by the situation; it was either money problems or equipment or both. This interview element generated further discussion about the facilities and the availability of equipment in school. This topic will be reported in more depth in the teaching resources section.

5.1.2. Teaching Resources

The previous discussion about TEFL approaches and in particular the eclectic one - which emerged to be the current approach to TEFL across the three education levels we are discussing, brought up curriculum-related data and generated important ideas. Whilst enquiring more about curriculum, I recorded an ample amount of data, which included commentary on books, extra materials, facilities, and equipment. There seemed to be a general consensus among the teachers interviewed that “curriculum is about every single element that contributes to the learning process...” as described by Sami. In order to get better teachers’ views, I organised the data into two main categories; 5.1.2.1. Teachers’ pack and 5.1.2.2. Other resources, as described by the participants. The data is reported below in the order they were discussed across the interviews.

5.1.2.1. Teachers' Pack

When asked about official documents that are provided to teachers, most of the participants across the different levels mentioned one essential resource they have access to, which was the *teachers' pack*. Nadia, for instance explained, "teachers have a textbook, a teacher's guide, an interactive CD and a tape. The tape and the CD have the same content; listening passages, chants, and songs." I tried to obtain more information about official documents, and most of the participants seemed to agree that they had no access to these documents (except for Ines, the teacher trainer, and Aziz, the inspector who took part in the study and Ali a senior secondary level teacher). Ines added "we usually receive official documents to explain changes and give instructions to teachers on how to approach teaching the material." I tried to continue the conversation with her at this point in order to find out more about teachers' familiarity with curriculum elements, but she was reluctant to give additional information except that "it is a document that has goals and objectives, it comes from the ministry, and is not to be discussed." Ali also said "generally, we follow the objectives of the book." This brought up two very important questions: Is it possible that the curriculum is not made available to the teachers? And could it be that the teachers are not interested in reading the official document and they simply follow the textbooks?

I investigated the official document for *Third Years of Secondary Education* (as show below in Figure 7, and the full document is in the references), I found out that the document provides detailed information about skills and strategies, but does not state clear goals and objectives.

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Speaking/Writing skills and strategies.....	12
Components of the programme	16
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Communicative Functions and Exponents	20

Figure 9: Snapshot from English Programmes

The teachers also talked about several changes of textbooks. Ines, for instance, said “English was introduced in 2001 in primary school, but so far five textbooks have been used: *Big red bus 1 & Big red bus 2* (these are known as the Spanish series) *English club*, *Welcome back to English*, and *Prime English* (all Tunisian publications). She contended “although the project is new, and although it is difficult to get used to it, they keep changing the books.” The primary school teachers did not seem very happy with these changes. There was a general feeling of insecurity and lack of consistency added to the challenges of the project. The reasons behind these changes seemed to be primarily economic; as claimed by Ines “the first two books were a grant from the British Council as an encouragement to start the project of integrating English in primary schools, and then in the second year the ministry had to supply books for the project.”

From my point of view, the feeling amongst those participants, who took part in the project, was of annoyance. They looked uncomfortable and unsure about what they called “right and wrong”. This was obvious in their facial expressions and the tone of voice while reporting the changes to the required teaching materials. Ines added, “I don’t want to sound negative, but there is a huge difference between using the *Spanish books* - we first used - and the local ones - we are using today -” I think teachers are aware of the importance of consistency in curricula, textbooks and approaches to be used. At this point another problem emerges, the imposition of textbooks and teaching

materials, which might be due to various reasons, for instance, economic ones. The findings in this area reminded me of Darder's (1991) view of knowledge, which is taught based upon what is recognized as "legitimate and necessary by those who dictate curricular decisions" (Darder, 1991, p. 19). This point will be discussed further in chapter six.

Almost all the participants agreed that the books in use today across the different levels claim to support the communicative approach. Ines added, "in primary schools we do not want to use one approach only, we prefer to mix and match." She believes, among others, that teaching primary level students requires teachers to go back to the audio lingual method as it is the best approach for young learners. Ines added "teaching English for Young Learners (TEYL) is comparatively new in Tunisian schools, and the approaches adopted in high schools cannot be generated to all learners and ages." Teachers seemed to agree that learners in primary schools should follow different approaches from older learners. In this respect, Lina, a primary level teacher in charge of teaching English, noted "I was initially trained to teach primary level students, I used to teach them French. Well, I am following the same approach I used to follow for French classes, although we had some training for English but I do not feel comfortable in that approach." Slim, another primary level teacher shared this opinion, "being originally a primary level teacher of Arabic, I find dealing with young learners easy and manageable, but teaching English is new to me, and sometimes I have to learn with my students. I agree with the idea that English classes should be kept to the minimum and simple, as far as teachers can develop, so that we can get the best of this project." I tried at this stage to explore further this new concept in primary schools in order to get a clearer idea about these two teachers' perspectives.

I learned that in primary schools, English is taught by two categories of teachers; 1) primary level main teachers and 2) IMEF (*Institut des Métiers d'enseignement et de Formation*) [Institute of education and training and crafts certified teachers]. The first type is primary level home teachers who are qualified to teach all primary school subjects except English. Ines claimed "theoretically speaking, no one is allowed to

teach before receiving intensive training (about 2 weeks) in the form of summer crash course in the *Anglophone village*.” This project was started in 2001 and continued for three consecutive years. It was an intensive teacher training course as Ines explained, “teachers who had never received teacher training courses when the project was generalized.” The second group were graduates from different specialties, which might or might not have been related to education. They received an intensive teacher training course in the IMEF. They were prepared to teach various school subjects including English. They had a sixty-hour training course about language teaching pedagogy; they attended few classes and had chances to practice in class as trainees. Ines contented that teachers at primary schools are not specialists of ELT “Unlike the preparatory schools and high schools, only specialist English language teachers, i.e. those majored in English, are allowed to teach English classes. In primary schools, graduates from all specialties can be trained and recruited to teach English.”

The decisions concerning implementing changes in TEFL along with the accompanying action plans seem, from my perspective, to have been rushed and not well- thought out. This is supported by Ines who said “the first year of starting English in grade five was a great failure.” Teachers do not seem to have been convinced nor wished to perform such a huge move. They should have been consulted in order to support the project and feel responsible for its success. The results of survey items 8, 9, and 17 clearly showed that the participants believe teachers should be involved in decision making.

		Strongly agree/ Agree	Strongly disagree/ Disagree
8	It was a good decision to introduce English in the primary level	25	80
9	Teachers were involved in the decision about implementing English in primary schools	10	95
17	Teachers should have a say in decision making	75	30

Figure 10: Interview items 8,9,17

5.1.2.2. Other Resources

This interview element number II generated further discussions about facilities and the availability of resources in schools. Almost all the participants complained about the lack of facilities and the quality of equipment; they talked about the classroom settings, the old black boards, the tape recorders' quality (if available), and the old sound files in addition to the promised language labs that are absent in almost every school. Ali noted with a great sense of humour "the classrooms are as old as me, however I still function but the black boards do not." Most of the teachers complained in this respect about the poor conditions of the labs and the lack of computers. Yasser talked about the "uncompleted" project that started back in 2010, he said "the previous government took an abrupt decision, and made it compulsory for every school to set a language laboratory, it was a very short notice." He added "it happened before the revolution, one of the government's connections has set a new business and sold computers to schools, the latter did not have the choice to refuse." [sic]

Four teachers in different interviews reported similar perceptions; they explained that schools were not prepared for such change, but they had to follow the instructions. Aziz

said “it would have been a great plan if they had completed it,” and Sami claimed “we were not ready, the equipment was not working very well, and the staff did not get enough training to contribute to the success of the project.”

However, Ines could not have disagreed more with these teachers’ views, she argued “it was a promising project, but all we saw is the lab being founded and the computers being installed, we never used it. It was not functioning. Then came the 2011 revolution and everything froze.” Sami had more information regarding this issue. He contended “when the transitory government was preparing for the elections they borrowed those computers but did not return them back.” The teachers expressed their concern regarding the challenge of the situation. Nadia, who is working in a remote area, said “when I was assigned to teach English, there was no space available in the school to teach my classes, so the director kindly agreed to turn the school kitchenette into a classroom, it is a weird shape and the teacher can never grasp a full view of the class.”

Conditions are reported to be adverse in some areas but teachers seem to be doing their best in order to teach English. Sami noted that even in big cities “there are no language labs at primary schools; lucky are those who could access the computer room.” The teachers reported a different issue while talking about tape recorders, Sami, for instance, said “the problem is that most of the time no more than one cassette player is found at school.” The problem lies in the concurrent timing of English classes, which is the last period in the day, “from Twelve to one, to all the classes” as reported by Ines. Therefore, all teachers need the recorder at the same time, but teachers usually end up using their own voice for the lesson.

The teachers also talked about the lack of teaching aids, Sami said “teaching aids are very basic if available.” Ines added in an angry tone “No flashcards, No classroom for English lessons, I teach in a classroom which looks like a tomb, it is very small, we can hardly move in there.”

The resources and equipment seem to be very limited in schools, and teachers are dissatisfied with such a situation. They think it prevents learning and particularly TEFL skills from developing. The statistics in the survey items (3,4,5, and 6) show that the majority of the respondents disagreed with the statements about the efficiency of the facilities in schools and eighty per cent believe that books needed to be changed as shown below in figure 8, for instance, eighty teachers out of one hundred and five, disagreed with the statement about the necessity of changing textbooks, I think this is a great indication of the despondency of the teachers with the status quo of the facilities - as discussed in 5.2.2 other resources - in schools, which are supposed to encourage students' learning rather than disrupt educational development.

		Strongly agree/ agree	Strongly disagree/ disagree
3	There are well-equipped labs for language teaching in schools	7	98
4	The textbooks in use at schools are good	40	65
5	Some textbooks do not need to be changed	25	80
6	Students get enough support in learning English	35	70

Figure 11: Summary of Efficiency of school facilities

5.1.3. Teacher Training

While discussing professional development (PD) elements in the interviews, teachers used a variety of expressions interchangeably to refer to professional development. For instance, 'training' and 'recycling'. Ines claimed that there are different types of professional development; they involve training teachers in different aspects of methodologies. Sami explained "training the teachers to teach, training the teachers to use new books, training the teachers to use new approaches, training the teachers to use language labs and new software." However, most of the participants agreed that teacher training involves two phases; 1. While studying and 2 While working. I had a feeling when discussing these constructs with the teachers that almost all of them were *unsatisfied* with the level of support they receive in both stages. PD opportunities are available but infrequent; however, teachers have professional development needs. I think in depth teachers' needs assessment should be conducted in order to understand better teachers' needs and consider this aspect in planning PD activities. This view was clearly shown in both survey items, number 10, where eighty five respondents out of one hundred and five, and number 12, where almost all the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement about the efficiency and effectiveness of professional development and teachers training programs.

		Strongly agree/ agree	strongly disagree/ disagree
10	Teachers get sufficient professional support from the ministry	20	85
12	Teachers are well-prepared for changes in curriculums	5	100

Figure 12: Interview items 10, 12

In the following section, I will describe the participants' views about training programs during the course of studies, which generally prepare teachers for professional life and cater for future changes in the field.

5.1.3.1. While studying

Five participants brought up the importance of teacher training programs at university. Amine, among others, thought teachers did not get enough practice while studying, and there was no course such as “Teacher Training”. He said “I think teachers should get better quality training while studying, we studied theories and theories but never had a chance to practise.” In an attempt to make clearer this concept, I asked a few questions about programs at university. Most of the participants agreed that “there are no teacher preparation courses at university, no one taught me teaching approaches or methodology in the classroom.” These elements seemed to be left out from college curricula; they are seen as part of the in-service training in Tunisia. However, from a modern educational perspective teachers need to be aware of teaching pedagogies and methodologies since day one as they will be practicing in classes. It is unfortunately a reality in the Tunisian university; there are no teacher training courses, which would be of great help to inexperienced teachers.

Additionally, there is no “Education” training in all language departments. In the English department, for instance, students may specialize in the language, but not in teaching the language either to young learners or to adults. Yasser claimed “I do not think we learned about teaching methods at university, I do not remember comparing or analysing any.” I think the participants are aware of the flaws in programs at universities, and they do not appreciate the fact that no measures were taken at this stage to prevent major problems in the future. Several respondents lamented “we never had teacher training while studying.” Indeed, fresh graduates are sent to classroom with no practical experience. Nevertheless, they remain under probation for

two successive years; meanwhile they attend observation classes with the supervisor on weekly basis.

Ines, as noted earlier, is a teacher trainer, who is training primary teachers to teach English. However, she never studied Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) nor did she receive Teacher Training courses. She said “When I studied, there was no TEYL course, now we are asked to train teachers in TEYL.” Ines is an experienced teacher, she was delegated the job because she is dedicated and has always tried to improve her abilities, and relied on her own resources as indicated in the interviews. But, I do not think this is sufficient in order to guarantee quality training for the teachers and contribute to the success of the project of English in primary schools. Ines thought “the situation is not favourable for success, and the project can fall apart anytime.” Based on this information, teachers think they do not get enough support, and the teacher trainer defended herself by saying “I am left with more than fifty teachers, how it would be possible to satisfy the needs of each teacher.”

The situation did not seem to be “favourable for success” and not one of the participants could be described as happy with the situation; they all blamed either the ministry of education, or the government, or the University for the lack of quality assurance in planning.

5.1.3.2. While working

Nadia added “once in the field we are left with one supervisor who has one method to follow, and the lesson is either black or white.” Teachers agreed at this point there should be effective training for teachers before embarking on teaching. Yasser confirmed “even while working, and while being trained in the first two years, we never discussed teaching methods, or tried techniques.” It seemed to me that teachers were unable to find a comfort zone that was deemed favourable and struggle-free to help them become skilled and more confident while working. The atmosphere seemed unfavourable for learning. A few teachers reported personal stories and memories that

would not be counted as good learning opportunities. For example, Sami said “I have the impression inspectors want to catch teachers doing something wrong.” At this point I think it is obvious that critical pedagogy does not seem to be encouraged by inspectors. Teachers are not motivated; they do not feel they had opportunities to develop requisite aptitudes, in order to experience constructive learning. Hence the need for critical pedagogy, which holds that teaching, is not a process whereby the teacher merely attempts to transfer knowledge from her or his mind to the minds of students, and sees pedagogy and learning as a social practice rather than a "decontextualized cognitive skill." The main tenets of critical pedagogy are that no education is politically neutral, and all education should be empowering and provide students with a model of critical behaviour they can take with them to the outside world. Critical pedagogy is transformative as discussed earlier and that is in line with Pennycook (1999).

Sami also blamed the in-service training “I do not like pedagogic day meetings; they are neither informative nor constructive, most of the time they raise arguments and end up on a bad note.” The "pedagogic day" is in theory one day per week, teachers of the same subject are released from teaching in order to meet with the supervisor and discuss relevant issues. Ali agreed with Sami, he said “pedagogical days are worse than classes, hundreds of teachers under one roof, and the inspector keeps talking about everything and nothing”. Similarly, Yasmine said “we learn nothing in pedagogical meetings; moreover, it happens once in a blue moon.”

At this level, I felt the participants were dissatisfied with the way the professional development programs were conducted. This might be because of the great number of teachers invited to these meetings, which they think are useless and have indefinite agendas and very limited opportunities for development. These meetings are not frequent as they should be, and they do not seem to provide the help they were meant to. Nadia said in this point “it is more a social gathering rather than a professional meeting.” Yasser could not agree more, he said “it is supposed to be an informative meeting but sometimes we leave with greater uncertainty” and “Training is kept to

mainstream if there is one.” Novice teachers, usually on probation for two years, are observed, directed and evaluated by supervisors. Once they become permanent teachers, they are left with no supervision unless they are in trouble or ask for a promotion.

Hence, I tried to ask the teachers about other professional development opportunities outside the circle of the inspector and the cyclic pedagogic meetings. Teachers seemed to be aware that “Professional development is a personal purpose and commitment,” as Ali said. However, they agree “there are no opportunities for learning or updating our systems, professional development is very expensive.” Moreover, Ines contended “we do not have funds for professional development.” In an attempt to find solutions and overcome such obstacles to learning and development, many teachers agreed with Amine as he said “we should have committees and coordinators for professional development.” I understood that teachers would like to receive professional development organized at higher levels and teachers have the right to be provided with professional development opportunities that are well organized and thought out. Yasser claimed “I do not think the training we received is sufficient, we need more training not only to be efficient but also to feel more comfortable.” He then added “inspectors in secondary schools are not interested in changes and innovation.” This might be due to similar problems at inspectors’ level, which means inspectors have their own routines, programs, and are indeed resistant to changes. Inspectors are mainly senior teachers who received some training and became in charge of the mission. I believe they still hold teachers’ attitudes and beliefs and could be resistant to change. Item number 13 revealed that eighty teachers out of one hundred and ten of the participants agreed with this view as shown in the table below.

		Strongly agree/ agree	Strongly disagree/ disagree
13	Teachers are resistant to educational changes in Tunisia	80	25

Figure 13: Interview item 13

A few teachers were negative while reflecting on their teaching. Amine, for example, said “we are still at *the teaching level* in Tunisia, we should move to *the learning level*, but the latter is far away from our training and curricula.” I had a feeling at this point that a few teachers are aware of the changes around the world but remain unable to develop, this may have been due to financial situations or to the unavailability of experts who would arrange for changes and train the teachers on how to move on and up.

Additionally, teachers spoke openly about the technological changes and challenges in the educational field. They seemed unhappy about the status of technology-integration in education in Tunisia. Sami said “we are still far away from the real developments in the world and namely in education.” Teachers agreed that they need more training to become able to use technology efficiently in the classroom. The majority of the participants confessed their weakness in using educational technology. Ali for instance stated “I am technologically challenged; I cannot try new technologies without training, however we need a few changes in our approaches, and I don’t know how.”

All the participants, with no exception, called for changes in teaching approaches. For example, Ines thought “we are still using old fashioned teaching methods; we would like to have additional teaching tools, equipment, facilities in schools. But we need to be trained first. How can I teach using something I do not know?” Amine added “we need more interactive classes, activities that suit the new generation to keep them focused, to challenge them and to make them love our classes. Sometimes I get bored in class; students need better conditions in class.”

Teachers did not seem opposed to changes in principle; on the contrary, they are impatiently looking forward to it. They were asking adamantly for professional development opportunities and think about improving situations in the field. Yasmine said “we need more practical courses, PD. sessions, and hands on for computer laboratory sessions.” Ali added in a humorous and ironic tone “teachers have an urgent need to change, they need to be formatted and new teaching systems need to be

installed for them to function better and cope with the global world.” The participants were so willing to change the way they were approaching TEFL but they do not know how to make this dream come true. Change generally comes from the people in charge. But the questions are: Do the people in charge know about teachers’ desire for change? And do they try to find out about the teachers’ views?

This conclusion brings an important point to the surface, which is my satisfaction at carrying out my research, I remain hopeful that it will make a difference in the educational field; open doors in the long run. This is consistent with the rationale and significance of my study emphasising the following aims: 1) to explore the TEFL situation and better understand the teachers’ perceptions & desires, 2) to gain awareness of the current situation in Tunisia, and 3) to create an awareness of the implications and make recommendations.

The analysis of survey results revealed that almost all the teachers are unhappy with the professional development opportunities provided by the authorities in order to help the teachers improve their skills and cope with the changes in the educational field. For instance, eighty per cent of the participants strongly disagree with the survey item number 10 as shown below. It also came to my attention that teachers did not talk or mention any teacher-initiated professional development activity; rather they repeatedly blamed the authorities for not supporting these factors, which indicate that the common understanding among teachers is that professional development is mainly the authorities’ responsibility.

		Strongly Agree/ agree	Strongly disagree/ disagree
10	Teachers get sufficient professional support from the ministry	20	85

Figure 14: Interview item 10

Nevertheless, the situation seems to be improving today. There are conferences and seminars taking place in Tunisia, which are meant to review and improve the educational level in Tunisia in general. For example the *National symposium on the methodology of the reform of the educational system*, this was held in Hammamet, Tunisia from 24 to 26 March 2012. Additionally, today there are frequent national and international training opportunities for teachers; for example a three-day conference was held in February 2013 to discuss and plan for opportunities of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), it involved teachers and teacher trainers. Moreover teachers may apply for international conferences and get funded either through the British or the American embassy; Ines for instance with another colleague had a chance to present at TESOL Arabia 2013 in the UAE, they were both funded by the American Embassy. However, such opportunities are available to a minority of teachers, who have good rapport with the sponsors, and remain very difficult or even impossible for most classroom teachers. Yasmine for instance said “the funds always go for the same people, I have never heard of an offer of sponsorship, I only hear about people who were sponsored to go.” I think many teachers share this point of view, and feel this discrimination is unfair to teachers. Therefore, teachers should be treated equally and perhaps a system of merit should be implemented in a competitive way to urge teacher to excel or to contribute somehow to the system in order to deserve a sponsorship for an international conference. This would be beneficial to the field, and furthermore, would guarantee transparency.

In the following, part B; I will analyse the information that emerged from the research tools and deemed relevant to the following research question. “What are the main elements of the current national debate about the projected LP in Tunisia?”

5.2.: LP and the National Debate

The interview items related to exploring teachers' perceptions of up-to-date LP along with the current public debate about it (the LP) in Tunisia. The information collected revealed multidimensional data. For practical reasons, I organized the data into two categories: I- The Status Quo of LP, and II - The National Debate of LP State of the Art.

In part I - The Status Quo of LP - three main themes emerged while analysing the information: 5.2.1.1. The political context, 5.2.1.2. The cultural context, and 5.2.1.3. The global context.

In part II - The National Debate of LP State of the Art, the data revealed two levels of description 5.2.2.1. The current political discourse, and 5.2.2.2. The social talk.

5.2.1. The Status Quo of LP

LP has always been rooted in context (Emmitt & Pollock, 1997; Daoud, 2001; Spolsky, 2004). In this thesis I considered three such contexts; political, cultural and global, as I explored their weight from the viewpoint of teachers.

5.2.2. The Political Context

While addressing questions related to LP, I realized that teachers connected this area tightly to government which, to my surprise, is no longer a taboo subject as it used to be before the 2011 revolution in Tunisia. I listened to teachers speaking publicly about the government's wrong decisions and false estimations. Sami among others thought that several changes were not well planned and did not originate from empirical studies, which did not guarantee success and growth for the educational journey. He stated

“the ministry keeps changing plans, and this does not help the students or the teachers.” Nadia added “sometimes I feel the change in strategies do not translate a philosophy; rather it shows the instability and inconsistency of our programs.” Ali has a less critical attitude; he thought “the government is trying to find the best solution for the students and the future of languages in the Tunisian educational system.” However, a few other teachers agreed that empirical studies and role models from different countries, for instance Malaysia, should be followed and adapted with a clear picture that promises success rather than “change for the sake of change” as expressed by Aziz. Yasmine claimed “the level of education has dramatically dropped in the last years, we do not really know who to blame: the students or the government.”

Moreover, almost all participants across the different levels from primary to secondary did not show a clear view about the decision of starting English in primary schools. The preparatory level teachers complained about unnecessary errors and learning habits as students move along to the preparatory school. However, I do not believe that such a short period, two hours per week for one year, could result in fossilized errors beyond repair, but teachers have their own beliefs that are difficult to change (Pajares, 1992; Richards, 1998; Standen, 2002). Rym said “I prefer to teach students the English language from scratch, rather than have to cope with the stereotypes they carry from primary schools. Sometimes it is almost impossible to erase or change students’ pre-conceived knowledge.” Sami, another preparatory teacher, shares this point of view. He stated “for example, in pronunciation, some students learn wrong pronunciation in primary schools, and this is very difficult to correct in the seventh grade.” He added “this problem might also promote learning disturbances for the students.” Sami thought it was not good practice to tell the students “what you learned is wrong, or your teacher was wrong.” Yasmine added “we do not blame the teachers here, they are doing their best, but we blame the government for implementing such a project without paving the way for success.” Yasmine also contended “the government’s decision affected the students and the teachers alike, they all suffer from inconvenient situations.” Ali could not agree more with this point of view; he said “I don’t see if starting the English language at an early circuit is a good solution. In the past, students used to master

French very well, then learn English and manage both languages, but today students barely speak French and can't learn English easily." Teachers at this point wondered whether the government was aware of the drawback of the TEFL language policy they implemented in the last decade. They wondered if feedback was sought in order to evaluate this project. However, there are studies in the field ensuring that the earlier students start learning English the better. However, Nunan, in an interview conducted in June 2008 in Tokyo by Russell Willis about being a best-selling author in China, argues "if you take a group of learners from a particular demographic and you start them learning English at the age of 5 and you take another group of learners from the same demographic and you start them learning at the age of 10 and you test both groups at the age 15 you find no difference" (Nunan, 2008).

Nevertheless, most participants seemed to agree that the majority of teachers are not aware of the government's perspective regarding languages. The participants did not provide specific answer to the interview elements about LP. Yasmine, for instance, stated "I don't think there is a clear LP, all we know is that children have to learn languages." Sami added with a sarcastic tone "if we are good friends with France, French has to be studied. But if America is providing more help so, English has to be learned from early ages." Yasser thought that it was the government ideology which outlines the LP; he said that *Ennahda*, the political party in power today - it is a moderate Islamist political party in Tunisia, also known as Renaissance Party - "has different views, they are calling for more Arabisation in schools, and there are new waves paying more attention to culture, religion and the language of the holy Quran." In an attempt to grasp better insight of this view, I asked for more clarification and personal views. Yasser said "we don't mind studying Arabic and fostering the mother tongue in the country, but this does not mean we have to go one step back." Yasser, with three other participants, thought that learning foreign languages and mostly English is an indicator of success and help students participate and communicate in the global world. Therefore, stepping back and reducing the students' chances to learn better English will automatically reduce their chances to cope with the international challenges. Yasmine added "we love our language and we are proud of our culture but

this won't help our children to embark in the global world". Yasser added "I don't think there is room for: *only* me, my language, and my culture now. It is time to think of us and our world." As the teachers talked about the ideological plans of *Ennahda* government, I felt their strong desire to develop rather than look backward. Ali added "we will always maintain our identity, and control our language." Moreover, in line with (Daoud, 2001) there is a general consensus that making English the first FL language seems to get resistance from academic circles, the educated elite, politicians, and international and local forces.

The political situation cannot be discussed without revealing the socio-cultural aspects and the overall effects on any country. This leads us to the following concern, which is the global context and the effects of the international or external factors on National LP.

5.2.3. The Global Context

The participants could not help talking about the international environment and its impact on the world's education in general and on the Tunisian educational system in particular. Sami said "the world is changing, the boundaries are widened, children belong today to the global world and the global world should have a say in their education." By saying so Sami among other teachers referred to global education and open curricula. The participants showed a strong awareness of the world change and the academic growth around the world. They also talked about technological growth and its direct impact on all countries. Ali said "no one can deny today that English is the language of the world, the language of technology, and the language of success" Yasmine added "no one wants to be left behind, our children have the right to avail a comprehensive knowledge as they belong to this global world." Nadia thought "we have to admit that the world has changed, and that we are part of this race, and we have to be prepared in order to cope with the competitive world." The participants were adamant that Tunisian students were part of the global society and had the right to

receive a decent education that is equal to the global standards. In this respect a few studies were conducted to highlight the role global communication plays in changing people's lives for instance a study conducted by (Marzouki, et al., 2011) investigated the contribution of Facebook to the 2011 Tunisian Revolution. They examined the perception of Tunisian Internet users regarding the social network Facebook and its contribution to the Tunisian revolution. The results provided specific descriptions of the perceived characteristics for the primary roles played by the Facebook in the Tunisian revolution. Facebook was perceived as a "catalyst" that accelerated the Tunisian revolution. Therefore people are aware of the role global communication plays in changing current situation and improving conditions. Nadia added "TEFL should be given higher attention and has to be prioritized over other foreign languages because it is the language of internet and global means of communication."

However, a few participants talked about giving equal chances to all foreign languages in the curricula and this is in line with different foreign attempts to support the educational system and to provide assistance to Tunisia. Yasser said "many countries are offering partnership; students have chances to get scholarships and study abroad. However, not all countries speak English, some train in German others in Italian, and therefore students need to learn languages other than English to utilize these chances." These participants agree with the government's view of introducing a variety of foreign languages to help the students to choose different destinations and communicate with different countries. The national policy in this respect seeks to provide foreign languages equal chances while focusing on one main language in particular, which is Arabic.

This debate is not new. In fact, Daoud (2002) argues that education policy makers will soon have to face a decision whether to keep French in the secondary school as the medium of instruction in the sciences or switch to Arabic (Daoud, 2002), however ten years later, we seem to be at the same point.

5.2.3.1. Foreign interventions

Additionally, a few participants evoked the issue of foreign intervention from a different perspective. Ines for instance claimed “all the countries offering assistance under the name of aid have their own agendas, it is in their interest to acquire new clients and a new business for their products” Yasmine from her part talked about the British Council plan to help integrate the concept of English in primary schools, she said “in the beginning *they promised paradise*, they even gave us wonderful books to use, and helped training the trainers in addition to other professional development opportunities offered.” She reported the benefits and the quality of the training the primary teachers received, but this advantage was short lived, Yasmine added “but this paradisiac situation did not last, it was over with the first school year, and we had to cope again with in- house publications which were not of the same quality.” Nadia added “why would any country offer support to promote its language in any country if it does not expect benefit in return?” Phillipson (1992) explained such a motive in terms of Linguistic Imperialism, he said it was a sub-type of Cultural Imperialism; it permeated all the other types of imperialism, since language is the means used to mediate and express them. He added that the spread of English can also be one of many factors contributing to the tragic loss of native languages around the world. The idea seemed to be popular among all the participants who agreed that every language has its own ideology that would be imported with the invasion with the language. Amine, for example, said “why would a group of researchers from the United States start a new project in Kairouan to study teacher training programs if they did not have a plan in mind? I think this is a new form of imperialism, coming this time through academic research.”

The data suggests that participants have critical awareness of discourses of hegemony and expansionism, but as Zughouli (2003) says "despite the hegemonic and imperialistic nature of English, it is still badly needed in the Arab world for the purposes of communicating with the world, education, acquisition of technology and development at large" adding “teaching English as a language of globalization necessitates changes

in the older approaches for the teaching of the language. It necessitates solidifying the teaching of the native language, empowering the learner to have more self-confidence through learning English.”

5.2.3.2. The Effects of Technology “Boom”

Time has changed and currently students’ needs are vastly different from earlier times. Ali said “children are born technologically enabled.” Nadia has also expressed the same idea as she talked about “digital natives” and almost all the participants agreed that the students’ learning styles and demands have changed. They have clearly stated that there is an obvious difference between everyday life or life outside the school and school life and most notably in English language classes. The students are well connected to the world through satellites, television, and internet. Yasser said “what happens today in the US for example will be published in the following minute on the students’ walls on Facebook.” Ines added “it is amazing how students are fast in sharing information and learning from international sources.” The participants also agreed that English is presently *the universal* language and students cannot do without it to cope with the changes in the world. The students need to be connected to the world’s news and developments. Nowadays, even programs at university changed and there are new sections that require advanced English such as international business or marketing. The teachers also talked about research at later stages in university; they agreed students have to gain good command of English even if they want to study inside the country. Ines said “Nowadays, even if the students pursue their studies in Tunisia, they need English to research and to translate important references in order to learn more. But if the students choose to study abroad; they definitely need to have good knowledge of English.” Ali added “in the past, students needed English only if they go to England or the US but today all over the world the universities speak English.” The participants made it clear that teachers, students and parents alike are presently aware of the global importance of the English language, and therefore it needs to be given a great deal of influence in schools.

The teachers also commented on school curriculum and resources, which should cope with the world development. Almost all participants thought that TEFL curricula need to be more “vivid” as described by Nadia saying “it is true we have CDs for listening but they are very limited, we need more interactive resources, we need more fun in classes.” Ines agreed with this concept and added “students need to be more engaged, they need to take the lead in their learning.” The teachers seem to be aware of the latest methodologies and the new pedagogies but they lack the resources to turn these beautiful theories into elegant practice.

5.2.4. The Social Context

5.2.4.1. The administrative level

While LP debate has been carried on at the political and the international levels, a socio-cultural aspect of FL command has increasingly been receiving attention. This dimension is also closely connected to the administrative and economic levels. The teachers talked intensively about community, jobs, and demands. Ali, for example, described the Tunisian administration as “typically French”. He said “French is dominating in the work place, in spite of the trends of Arabisation that invaded the country at different times; the Tunisian administration is still speaking French.” Nadia showed great concern about a personal experience she had, and said in a sad tone “I failed to secure a “*copie conforme*” - certified copy - for my Master’s Degree from the Tunisian authorities because it was written in English.” She continued “I was told, the two official languages in Tunisia are Arabic and French, and any other language needs an official translation.” She was frustrated while reporting her story, adding “I don’t believe that none of the employees in the municipality can read English” Nadia then said “the Tunisian administration won’t be ready to incorporate English soon; we need more than one decade ahead.” A few more participants evoked this problem. Ines for

example, reported “I faced a big problem in the ministry of higher education, where English is normally well known and spoken... I asked for the equivalency of a Canadian Diploma but it was not accepted because it was signed *approved* rather than *successful*.” Now it seems to be a lexical problem rather than a comprehension issue. The participants seemed to agree that there is a huge communication problem in the Tunisian administration when it comes to English. Therefore, the workforce is not ready yet to host employees whose language of communication is English rather than French or Arabic.

5.2.4.2. The socio-economic level

Moreover, the teachers mentioned financial problems and lack of resources, which prevent the English language from functioning well in the country. Yasser said “how could we talk about availing resources to help the workplace adapt the English language or even include it, when we don’t have a sufficient budget to help learning English in schools.”

Another important issue discussed through interviews was the job requirements and the job resources. Sami said “to get recruited for example in *Tunisie Telecom*, (the main telecommunication provider in Tunisia) you need to have a good knowledge of French and understand the French software because the infrastructure of this company is French and has a French culture or framework.” Therefore, the teachers think even though the whole world is moving to English “we still can’t move forward without French” as claimed Yasmine. Ali said “we seem to have French trademarks and this for sure has huge effect on LP in the country” and then added “we still need French support for economic reasons therefore we still need the French language to succeed.”

5.2.4.3. The socio-cultural level.

English is a FL in Tunisia, if you walk in the street and you greet people in French, you will be greeted back, *bonjour, salut, ca va?* These common words are part of the Tunisian culture. But if you greet them in English you might get a dirty look, or people might wonder if you are swearing at them. Tunisian society is not used to English, a child might respond to command in French but not in English. The latter is used by children to sing, play and have fun but not to follow instructions in English. Rym said “French is the language of instruction for sciences in secondary schools.” Ines added “French is a serious language, whereas English is used for songs and movies” again at a social level Slim thought “if parents are educated they might encourage children to learn more English otherwise it is left to them, it might be seen as a hobby either to take or to leave.” But, nowadays people are more and more aware of the importance of the English language. There is a new tendency within society of resorting to private schools where the language of instruction is mostly English. Yasmine stated that “parents and children alike recognize the importance of this FL for the workplace, and mostly abroad.” English is a means of communicating with all the nations who do not speak Arabic or French. English is also seen as a passport to work in the Arabian Gulf nowadays, from vocational to postgraduate qualifications. Amine contended “getting a contract to work in the Gulf is the dream of Tunisian youth today, but the English language proficiency is a great obstacle. Almost all participants agreed that Tunisians are well- educated and qualified for a variety of jobs, and most importantly they are sought by employers, however their poor English is the main obstacle for their success in job interview.”

Therefore, English is no more the language of research and sciences only, as it used to be seen, it is quite an inherent skill for vocational studies as well. This is in line with Daoud (2000) who advocates that the push for English is increasing in the business world, and expertise in English became a necessity in job specifications.

Moreover, English is a compulsory subject in the tertiary level in Tunisia; hence it needs to be fostered in pre-tertiary level. Harrabi (2010) states that the recent emergence of English in Tunisia has made the situation more complicated; this is in line with (Battenburgh, 1997; Champagne, 2007; Daoud, 2007; Walters, 1998). He stated that in the 1980s only fifty four per cent of higher education institutions in Tunisia offered English courses. By the 1990s, more than fifty science, business and engineering departments taught English. The 1998 Reform generalized teaching of English at the undergraduate level in all higher education institutions. Therefore, this should flow across the different educational levels and in order for students to be successful in ESP –English for Specific Purposes - courses at university level; they need to have solid ground for global English in schools.

5.2.5. The National Debate State of the Art

5.2.5.1. The current political discourse

I think it is important to mention the main features of the national debates on LP first. Then I can analyse teachers' views about the debate and potential or possible language policies. For example, one main point in the debate is Arabisation [as proposed by Ennahda party].

Mainly after the 2011 revolution, discussions about LP within the government came to the surface. In keeping with political views and strategies, potential candidates made this topic part of their electoral campaign and tried to analyse the current situation and promise for the best of language use in society. However, the participants seem to agree that this is mostly propaganda and that nothing tangible seemed to happen in the educational field. This is because of two reasons: 1) a debate is different from an actual policy. 2) the government is temporary and does not have full political power for such a massive step as a change in a LP. Ali stated "it is always the same story,

politicians warn about current situations and promise for a bright future, but we did not see any changes or improvement after almost one year after the revolution.” Sami added “and nothing will happen in the next few years, the current government proved to the large masses that they are not interested in education or development.” Rym could not agree more, she thought that the government has “other cats to whip and LP do not seem to be a priority for them.”

The participants thought the political discourse does not reflect real situations in schools. Yasser said “the current President is calling for more Arabisation, don’t we have enough of Arabic? Don’t we need more English to cope with the changes in different aspects around the world?” Ines talked about interim President Marzouki’s article in *Jabal AL loughat*—The mountain of languages - she said “the President is mocking the local dialects in the electoral campaign, he said what is “*wkayet bech tkayed*” - time to register - that was everywhere in the street, on television, in the news written and spoken? He wants to move away from dialects to standard Arabic.” Priority therefore is given to improving the Arabic usage in the country rather than thinking of foreign languages.

Nadia said “the political discourse of President Marzouki enhances translating everything to Arabic” she added “and to encourage using technology, he advised to digitize Arabic books” Nadia and six other teachers contended that Marzouki is aware of the importance of progress in education around the world and the vital role technology plays in conveying learning messages. However, he does not recognize the importance of the English language in this journey. The participants showed their displeasure with the prospective policy. Ines said “this is no good promise for the future of TEFL, such a decision does not consider the global world and the development, and we should improve the status of English language rather than pushing back again.” For a few participants it is rather “re-inventing the wheel.” Sami said “the English digitized books are there! We can make use of technology and improve English.” The teachers seemed to agree that the new interim government does not have an actual plan for improving the teaching of the English language.

A few interview respondents, for example Yasmine and Aziz suggested reinforcing the English language through teaching school subjects in English, for instance the sciences, or through focusing more on EFL. Yasmine and five other participants commented on President Marzouki's opinion about Arabising sciences, and reverting to teaching all subjects through Arabic, which they think is inappropriate at the current time. According to them, this view has a particular agenda, which is ignoring the importance of the English language and the benefits it could bring to the society.

The survey items 21 and 22, as shown below, confirm the view that the government's agenda contradicts the teachers' aspirations looking forward changes in language policy. For instance, all the respondents, with no exception, showed their aspirations for changes in TEFL policy.

		Strongly agree/ agree	Strongly disagree
21	The current debate about language policy reflects my aspirations	25	80
22	I am looking forward to changes in TEFL policy in Tunisia	105	0

Figure 15: Interview items 21 and 22

Additionally, Ines, among other participants, did not agree with the President's opinion about varying languages in secondary schools, that is to say teaching three or four foreign languages to the students. She stated "students should focus more on English, which is an *international* language, and then they can choose to learn more languages as needed." Ali said the teachers believe that nowadays students "do not master any language because they are not focused on any."

5.2.5.2. The social talk

Coming to the social perspective, almost all the teachers in the study believe that Tunisian people are looking forward to promoting the English language in schools and at home alike. Sami, for example, said “parents nowadays encourage their children to take part in English clubs, sing English songs, and watch English speaking movies. This is because they badly want their children to study in the US or in any English speaking country after the baccalaureate.” In this respect, Yasser added “nowadays, parents believe English is *the* vehicle to the world of education.” This means that in the past the English language used to be learned for fun only, but today the students take it more seriously, and feel an urgent need to have good command of English in order to travel and study abroad. A few participants agreed that English is becoming the talk of the street for the younger generations. This might be due to music, movies and the internet in every home. Sana believes “English can’t be considered secondary any more, people like it, speak it and need it”.

Moreover, Yasser added “if you take a look at social networks, you will see people’s views about learning English. Nowadays, parents come to school to see English teachers and ask about ways of improving their children’s skills in English,” this seems to be new to the teachers who agreed that in the past parents always came to meet math, physics, and French teachers, which they consider major keys for success. However, today English seems to be gaining ground in people’s minds, and parents are looking for better Education for their children.

The general consensus outwardly in society these days is that ‘Education through English’ is the best because it carries a successful methodology and caters for a flexible pedagogy, unlike the French system which is rigid and is either black or white. I did not get a specific example from the participants about this issue; however, they just scratched the surface in an attempt to compare teaching both languages French and English.

However, the majority of the participants did not seem to be enthusiastic about the national debate, because it did not seem to reflect their aspirations and would not lead to the changes they would like to see in TEFL. Survey item (21) - The current debate about LP reflects my aspirations - confirms this conclusion, it shows almost eighty per cent of the people do not believe that the current debate reflects their desires to transform TEFL. Moreover, sixty per cent believe that the political discourse about the LP is inconsistent as shown in the survey item (19), most of the participants in the study insisted on the importance of being involved in decision making, and only twenty percent believe that the current debate about language policy reflects their aspirations, which give them the feeling of being discarded from the whole system. Eighty teachers out of one hundred and ten believe that the current language policy reflects their aspirations as shown below.

		Strongly agree/ agree	Strongly disagree/ disagree
19	The political discourse today about the language policy inconsistent	42	63
21	The current debate about language policy reflects my aspirations	25	80

Figure 16: Interview items 19, 21

In the following part C, I will analyse the data that emerged from the research tools and is related to teachers' wishes to TEFL hypothetical situations in classrooms as well as changes in the social conception to the English language.

5.3. PART C: Teachers' Desires and Expectations

5.3.1. In the classroom

When I asked the participants about the elements of an ideal TEFL environment, one interesting response was "I love this topic!" This opinion along with similar reflections from other teachers made me conclude that *Teachers believe change is not going to happen any time soon, and the current state of TEFL classes is too complicated to be improved*. Therefore, teachers considered the interview item - desired changes in TEFL - as unrealistic, and falls into the realm of *dreams*. Ali, for instance, said "don't ask me how I wish the class to be. Instead, you should ask: what possible changes could improve TEFL?" He thought change is not easy and could even be impossible because the current overall conditions - social, political, and economic - "suffer from instability, uncertainty, and the whole picture is still blurry."

Yasser said "nowadays - in this transitory period - the political atmosphere is loaded with problems now we don't really know which is better either to hope for changes or to pray for the situation to remain as is in order to avoid a worse scenario." I think such an attitude emanating from the teachers is due to different reasons: Firstly, economic reasons because in order to change TEFL's status, major funds are needed, and as Yasmine said "it is of no priority in the plans of the Ministry of Education." Secondly, it could be also due to unclear plans and inspiration on the part of the ministry, because they have more issues to contend with, for example, finding jobs for unemployed teachers. Thirdly, it might stem from the unstable socio-political situation and incessant conflict within society, which prevent change and improvement from happening. For instance, strikes and incessant demands of the syndicate of teachers to improve situations and reconsider pay. The government seems to have priorities in plans; however, reforms in education are underway, for instance: 1- The educational reform seminar (March, 2012), which looked into reform and innovation in education, and 2- The integration of the Tunisian expatriate competencies in higher education and

scientific research (February, 2013) which was organized to support research and innovation. The symposium addressed three main points; 1) reform in higher education and scientific research, 2) integration of Tunisian competencies abroad in order to support research and innovation, and 3) evaluation and assessment.

While discussing educational reform most of the participants showed a cynical attitude, which is mainly due to frequent promises and false hopes that the interim government gave but did not fulfil on the one hand, and to a vague political agenda, which prevents teachers from identifying the TEFL stand point on the other. This is mainly due to instability and the absence of focus on the part of the temporary government, the discrepancy between the promises made while campaigning for the elections and real situations after the elections. In spite of these negative vibes, and despite the teachers being defeatist about sudden changes in the field, I managed to record a pretty long wish list, which I summarized in (Appendix 10), which definitely indicated that teachers have the views needed for an ideal situation in TEFL but cannot take action plans to carry them out. For instance Yasmine said “we need to incorporate critical thinking” and Amine added “we need more training...experts... professional development and we need to update our systems.” This clearly shows teachers’ awareness of the situation and explains their urgent need to change.

Nadia said “we need to maintain the aesthetic aspect of teaching a foreign language...we would love to see happy students eager to learn a new language in classes.” This reflects her awareness of the importance of the emotional side in learning, which is increasing nowadays among teachers. Teaching is more than apprenticeship as defined in Lave (1988), it is regarded as an art and needs to be treated so. This clearly shows that participants have strong desires to change the traditional views to teaching English as well as the current status of TEFL. Yasmine said “first, we would like to see genuine language classrooms, working students and lots of communication going on.” Ali added “English language classes should be more active.” Sami agreed with Ali’s opinion and he added that “the students barely move in our classes.” Amine emphasised the same point, he stated “English is seen as a

subject in schools that kids have to pass and not a language they have to learn and improve skills...with current approach we are simply teaching to the test.” Almost all the participants agreed on improving TEFL status in Tunisia; they called for urgent educational reforms and immediate intervention on the part of the ministry to cope with the global change and compete with the world. However, this seems to be only the English teachers’ point of view, for enhancing the English language was not the request of other disciplines as discussed in the seminars cited earlier.

Similarly, in the survey, eighty per cent of the participants confirmed that the difficult conditions in classes prevent TEFL classes from achieving the ultimate goal of fluency in English. Therefore, the responses to items: 1 - the class sizes are manageable - and 2 - The weekly hours for English classes are sufficient – clearly indicate the situation in classrooms needs to be improved in order to obtain better results.

5.3.2. Beyond the classroom

Slim said “teachers need to be able to decide on what to teach and how to teach.” Rym added “the ministry should train teachers to become masters in their classrooms, manage curricula, design material and choose the right strategy for teaching and conveying messages.” Nowadays, Tunisia lives in an atmosphere of freedom, teachers would like to carry this enthusiasm to the classroom and “practice true democracy in the classroom,” confirmed Ines.

Amine added “English is a global language, and Tunisia is part of the globe, we need to communicate with everybody else, therefore learning better English is a must for better global communication.” The participants expressed their concern about the projected LP, they showed a great deal of attention to Arabic; however, they did not deny the fact they wanted English to be promoted in society. Yasmine, for example, asserted “we all love our mother tongue, nobody wants Arabic to be affected by recent trends, but this does not mean we do not want to learn better English.” Ali also

elaborated on this point in his turn; he said “English is no more the language of songs and movies. It is the language of instruction for sciences and business; therefore, we should improve it in society and encourage people to use it everywhere.”

Sami and three more participants also mentioned the socio-religious aspect in this debate, he said “even from a religious perspective, Prophet Mohammed *peace be upon* him encouraged us to learn foreign languages in order to understand other people’s cultures and views in order to obtain the best from them and ignore their sins.” The participants agreed in the end that learning English is beneficial to the society as a whole and that improving the TEFL situation in schools is a serious frequent need in order to advance in all socio-economic aspects.

Overall, almost all the informants seemed to agree that change in TEFL policy has to happen in order to assist in all the following aspects of Tunisian life; social, economic, cultural, and political. This approach was also confirmed by the survey items (15 and 16) where all participants unanimously agreed that TEFL policy should vary according to the revolution principles; for instance freedom, openness to the world, and that globalization requires different approaches to teaching English.

		Strongly agree/ agree	Strongly disagree/ disagree
15	TEFL policy should change according to the revolution principles	105	0
16	I think globalization requires different approaches to teaching English	105	0

Figure 17: Interview items 15 and 16

Giving more thought to English, teachers believe that the approach to educational policy in Tunisia, which emphasizes literacy in Arabic as a priority, as well as the development of proficiency in foreign languages as explained in Daoud, (2001) should change. Teachers also believe they should be involved in such a decision. The survey

analysis also showed that teachers are aware but unsatisfied with their passive role in educational changes. The response to survey item (14) Teachers have easy access to official documents of LP – showed eighty per cent strongly disagreed with the statement, which clearly indicates that teachers are *not* part of decision making process although their input is very important. Besides, the unanimous disagreement - hundred per cent - with survey item 20 -The envisioned changes in TEFL are clear - reinforces this view.

		Strongly agree/ agree	Strongly disagree/ disagree
14	Teachers have easy access to official documents of language policy	20	85
20	The envisioned changes in TEFL are clear	0	105

Figure 18: Interview items 14 and 20

In conclusion, all participants across the different research methods voiced their concerns about the current situation, however, they sounded enthusiastic about changing TEFL policy and practices, and this was obvious in the survey item (20) two as the entire population with no exception is looking forward to changes in the TEFL policy in Tunisia.

The following Chapter 6: Implications and Recommendations carries more in-depth analysis of teachers' desires and expectations of changes in TEFL, it will discuss the implications and the findings in the light of the literature and the current situation in Tunisia. Therefore, in this study I kept updating the information because the situation in the country is not stable, and such a flux does not help decision making and definitive statement.

CHAPTER 6: IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 5, the research revealed rich data, which was categorized into various themes. They all revolved around two major themes: the status quo and the desired future of TEFL in Tunisia. This chapter discusses first the implications of the findings (6.1) and then reveals the recommendations (6.2) reached in light of both the literature and the context in which the research was carried out.

Section (6.1) discusses two major issues: firstly, the disjunctions that were brought to the surface throughout the research and that seem to exist between EFL teachers' *actual* perceptions and desires on the one hand, and the Policymakers' current practices and future projects on the other. Secondly, the immediate changes in TEFL that the teachers deemed urgent.

The recommendation section (6.2) reveals the overall conclusion and suggests possible solutions to the issues under scrutiny.

6.1. Implications

6.1.1. Disjunction between Policymakers' practices and EFL teachers' perceptions

Although policy makers claim to be looking for teachers' views and feedback in order to conduct reforms and ensure success for the educational system in Tunisia, the study revealed discrepancies between policy makers' views, as shown in recent practices, and teachers' actual perceptions and expectations of the LP through educational reform. These disjunctions are noticed in three major facets; the status of the English language, Arabisation in education, and foreign intervention in educational reforms.

6.1.1.1. The status of the English language

It was obvious from the data collected throughout my study that English teachers have great expectations about devoting more importance to the English language either through allocating more hours to EFL classes and improving curricula, or through enhancing the English language by teaching the sciences through English. However, these expectations do not seem to be possible. The government's plans and policies for education show that the actual practices match more the political discourse than the teachers' aspirations, which is mainly about diversifying languages in education. Spolsky (2004) claims that LP is comprised of three components: practices, ideology and planning. Nevertheless, the teachers' requests are not yet reflected in the government's practices and planning. The Ministry of Higher Education website and under international cooperation, there is evidence of widening the scope of languages in education as shown in the ministry website (<http://www.mes.tn/anglais/index>).

International cooperation regarding studying abroad is no longer exclusive to English or French speaking countries. Hence, in addition to the usual main stream ones, it is also freely available for example in Chinese, Turkish, Japanese, and Korean. These practices are coherent with the 2012 political discourse, which enhances banning the single-foreign-language system that makes *the Maghreb Francophone* and *the Mashreq Anglophone*. However, this is still a debate and has not been officially declared as policy. Therefore, the government encouraged teaching different foreign languages to different groups of students in secondary schools in order to widen the scope of international cooperation, and profit from the economic support of different countries around the globe.

I believe such a strategy is beneficial as it increases the possibilities of studying abroad for the students, gaining more expertise in different fields around the world, and bringing back home a diversity of knowledge and experiences. Therefore, it is obvious that the *globalised* world is not restricted to English speaking countries, but it should be extended to all nations, and people should seek opportunities in different parts of the world whatever their language of communication may be. This policy seems to be new in Tunisia; because Salhi (1984) said that there [was] still no clear English LP in Tunisia, and no coordination at the level of the ministry of higher education. Nowadays, although there is still no official document for reference, LP in education seems to be taking shape through practice. According to Judy (1999) "in accord with Tunisia's efforts at integration-driven economic reform, the country's Ministry of Higher Education has undertaken a reform of the tertiary education system that seeks to achieve a more seamless fit between university education and market needs. English-language education has a prominent role in this reform of the national undergraduate curriculum, on the understanding that having a workforce that is capable of using the English language will enhance the prospects for successful integration into the global economy." This is in keeping with Shohamy (2006) who claims that LP falls *between* ideology and practice. It includes both overt and covert mechanisms which create and maintain official policies and practices.

6.1.1.2. The Arabisation policy

The data analysis has clearly shown English teachers' enthusiasm about enhancing English language learning either through teaching some school subjects in English, for instance the sciences, or through devoting more focus on EFL. However, nowadays, policy makers seem to be taking 'Arabising' more subjects in schools and universities more seriously. Latiri (2004) defines Arabisation as the process of promoting Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) to the level of a fully functional language in educational, administrative, and mass-media domains, to replace the language of the former European colonial powers. Earlier, Daoud (1991) argues that Arabisation was not merely an issue that concerns only linguists and educationalists; it was rather a LP issue closely tied to the political, social, and cultural situation prevailing in each Arab country and to the ruling elites' objectives in establishing and maintaining power.

Moreover, teachers did not seem opposed to changes, as conventionally known; rather they are impatiently looking forward to these reforms. They believe that very little has been done so far, two years after the 2011 revolution, and that any step forward to the reform would patently be beneficial for the students and the system as a whole. Certainly in my research and in my experience, I believe that teachers feel that nothing could be worse than the current situation. However, they showed a great concern about the possible endangered status of English if the government decided to move forward in Arabisation project.

Therefore, this shows that the LP debate is not new in Tunisia, it started long before the 2011 Revolution. Entelis (1986) says "after Morocco and Tunisia gained their independence in 1956 and Algeria in 1962, they decided, as an affirmation of their cultural identity, against the former colonial power, to adopt Arabic as the official language instead of French" (1986, p.3). Eventually, Daoud (2002), for instance, argues that education policy makers would soon have to face making a decision

whether to keep French in the secondary school as the medium of instruction in the sciences or switch to Arabic (Daoud, 2002). Today, over ten years later, we seem to be at the same point because there was a feeling in the last decade that this project was abandoned when the ruling party decided to dispose of such a policy. Hechmi (1984) claims "while the first two decades of independence were devoted to the spread of education [1960s] then to Arabisation and Tunisification [1970s], the present decade is that of making choices for the future. The key issue is how to form the generation of the year 2000" (Hechmi, 1984, p. 16; as Cited in Daoud, 1991, p.4). He argues, therefore that what was interesting in such a statement was not only the claim that Arabisation has been successfully achieved, but he implied it was no longer a matter for public debate. Even though the LP debate phased out at a certain point in the past, it clearly came back to the surface recently with the new government's political discourse (Souag, 2011) and the national debate through media and social networks. For instance, the official blog of Nigel Bellingham, the country director of British Council, Tunisia.

Samti (2011) claims that a cultural matter that has been addressed lately is Ennahda's call for giving more value to Standard Arabic which raised the assumption that the French language might no longer be as important as it used to be in Tunisia. But, a member of the political bureau of Ennahda, denied such an assumption arguing that giving more value to our mother tongue has nothing to do with keeping a distance from France. He said "it's about preserving our language and not marginalizing it. In fact, France has a similar challenge as the French language, notably literary French, has been deteriorating. Cultural creativity is closely related to how much the mother tongue is valued." He added that encouraging learning French in Tunisia was necessary as the French language is a part of some Tunisians' lives, and it would always be the second language in Tunisia.

From this perspective, it is obvious that Arabisation is not an immediate project to be implemented, because such a policy needs further research and planning before coming to life. Mainly after the 2011 revolution and the implications it had on the Tunisian society. However, I think Arabisation would not affect the status of the English language in Tunisia because teaching curriculum subjects in Arabic is *not* a regressive point as far as English is concerned. School subjects were *never* taught in English, and English has always been treated as a FL in Tunisia. Therefore, if such a proposal is turned into reality, English does not lose its status but French does because for a long time it has been the language of instruction for the sciences in spite of all the fluctuating changes. In my opinion, the question is still the same when it comes to ELT: How to improve the status of EFL in Tunisia?

The question then is whether the Arabisation policy today is the right move for the educational systems in the Arab world. In this respect, several studies were conducted in different Arab countries. For instance, those in the Middle East, the Arabian Gulf and North Africa, which addressed the most suitable language of instruction in schools (Abu Baker, 2000, Al Kitbi, 2006; Ahmed, 2010; Arani, 2004; Al Baik, 2008; Graddol, 2006; Saad 2011; Troudi, 2009; Mills, 2008). These studies examined various contexts and reached different conclusions, but it is worth noting that although all these countries belong to the Arab world, they have different linguistic complexities and social structures. Therefore, possible solutions for some of these countries might not be suitable for others. Hence, I looked for research in the field that was conducted in North African countries only, where the situation is very similar because they all have French as the language of science in Higher Education (Al-Katib, 2000; Daoud, 2001; Marley 2002; Redouane, 1998; Salhi, 2002). For instance, Marley (2002) says that Tunisia shares the same linguistic diversity of Morocco and Algeria as a North African country and an ex-French colony.

Morocco is a multilingual country which for some forty years pursued an LP - Arabisation - with the apparent aim of creating a monolingual nation (Marley, 2002). In 2000, however, the Charter for Educational Reform recognized the value and necessity of other languages already present in Morocco, and set out guidelines for improving the teaching and learning of these languages in Moroccan schools. Bouchra (2012) argues that using one language as the medium of instruction seems to be inevitably successful in some countries. However, she says that in multilingual societies such as Morocco and Algeria, basing education on one medium of instruction results in the failure of the whole educational system. She concluded that Arabisation, which was implemented as an LP and a medium of instruction in Morocco and Algeria in the 60s, was never successful, and that both Morocco and Algeria were not ready to function through a single language.

However, the failure of the Moroccan experience does not automatically mean the failure of Arabisation in Tunisia; rather it represents an incentive for LP makers to study further the infrastructure in the country and to consider carefully the linguistic background of the society and move steadily forward. Entelis (1986) for instance argues that Tunisia has fewer Berber speakers than its neighbours, and Arabisation policies in Tunisia never gained the political attention they received in Algeria. He added the internal political debate focused more on curricula than on the language of instruction.

I think there is another important factor that should be taken into consideration when discussing Arabisation of school subjects; Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is taught in school, is not practiced in daily life. Therefore, there is a lack of motivation on behalf of the students to perfect this language. MSA *cannot* be considered the first language (L1) in Tunisia, it is true that Arabic is the official language of the country, but in form of "darja ,"dialect, which is the spoken Arabic with different accents from North to South rather than the classical form. I think "darja", which is the *actual* L1 in Tunisia,

with its broad diversity, *cannot* hold the same status as MSA, which is the first *academic* language. Judy (1999) claims that Arabisation in Tunisia aimed at producing an Arabic modernity as well as an integral national linguistic space of cultural authenticity. Arabisation, therefore, does not seem to be easy to achieve as students still find difficulties through MSA in managing their learning on the one hand and future workplace requirements on the other. Daoud, (2001) argues that despite the fact that students learn Modern Standard Arabic and French in school, the two languages of literacy in Tunisia, they do not develop native-like mastery in either language.

Additionally, Maamouri (1998), while discussing the future of education reforms and Arabisation policy, argues that “since the nature of educational reform and change is complex, lengthy and dynamic, rapid developments should not be expected soon on the Arab educational scene. It may even take generations to achieve an Arabic LP and practice that would change the nature of Arabic instruction and turn it from a bar to an open door to learning and better living conditions in the whole Arab region” (Maamouri, 1998, p. 69).

Hence, I believe it would be unrealistic at this point to aim at being able to prepare the students to master lifelong learning skills through one of the above mentioned languages. Because, firstly we need to enhance languages learning first and ensure students have good command of a language and then move to different skills. It is noteworthy that foreign languages also have the capacity to help learners cope with diversities in the global world, as well as broadening their cultural experiences and awareness.

6.1.1.3. Intervention in educational reform

Shohamy (2006) claims that language policies are used as instruments of Western extension of control over other peoples because they favour the elite's interests over those of masses which seek independence. I believe such points of view are very worth considering. Due to the lack of empirical research in this same area, it has proven somewhat of challenge to find other studies that were conducted on teachers' views and perceptions about foreign interventions in educational reforms. However, I managed to find points of view of professionals in the field from the UAE, where major reforms have been taken on board. Dr Maryam Sultan Lootah, Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, College of Humanities and Social Sciences UAE University, and Dr Hessa Abdullah Lootah, an Assistant Professor at the Department of Mass Communication College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the same university, both gave a detailed interview to The Strategic Center of Strategic Sciences and Research (ECSSR) on the side-lines of the 1st Annual Education Conference organized by ECSSR on 5-6 October 2010. The interview covered a range of issues related to the status of education in the UAE including foreign influence on education, medium of instruction and education reforms. Dr Hessa Lootah stated that relying solely on the Western model will eventually lead to mistakes. She said that cultural invasion in educational institutions affects values and consequently rids the national identity of its main base represented by religion, language, heritage and history, adding that this could afflict the society with slackness and diminish social coherence besides eliminating the values that drive the will to progress. Dr Merriam, meantime, looks at the Westernization of education through the prism of foreign interference in educational policies since the 1990s, especially after September 11. This interference, according to her, has taken place in the curriculum and teaching of the Arabic language, Islamic and national education and history and derails education and its objective of creating good citizens.

I have also attempted to explore further a few English language projects that were initiated in Tunisia in order to improve TEFL. An American organization - *World Learning* - works with local partners from different countries to identify specific needs, resources, and challenges - started a reform project in Kairouan, as mentioned above, with a view of reviewing and improving teacher training programs but this project was soon cancelled for miscommunication problems within the institution.

In 2009, McIlwraith Education, a consultancy business based in Edinburgh that helps governments, organisations and institutions reach their education goals conducted a research for the MoE investigating the English language situation in Tunisia. They found two main conclusions. 1) There is evidence of patterns of language use in the world of work that support the English LP orientation of the MoE as a tool in promoting Tunisia's modernisation. 2) There is support for the suggestion that the majority of users of English in Tunisia have either neutral or positive feelings towards the language. And the few individuals who are less welcoming the global influence of English recognise a pragmatic imperative to learn and use it. They suggested a framework plan that encompasses the following areas: 1. Inspectorate and Team Training, 2. Curriculum Development, 3. Syllabus and Materials Development, 4. Testing and Assessment, and 5. Training, Teaching and Learning (McIlwraith, 2010).

It is worth noting that while conducting this research McIlwraith followed the PRINCE methodology, as stated in the report. This methodology is business-led, which nurtures the spirit of consumerism and shows that such research has economic agendas in addition to the claimed educational one.

I think the suggestions stated are common practice and the implementation plan they suggested is a standard solution and reform plan for any educational system facing rapid changing problems. However, I believe it is very important to think about the

means of conveying this reform to the educational core. This raises another important question: Should the reform implementation involve *mainly* foreign experts to design training programs for Tunisian professionals and advise about curriculum development? Tunisia has well educated scholars and experts, either residing inside the country or abroad, who are contributing effectively to research according to international standards. As a result, I believe these two assets could secure a successful reform for the educational system if organized properly; hence, the MoE could rely on Tunisian competencies and designate experts to implement the results presented in the McIlwraith report. This task might seem challenging but is not impossible. This does not mean that I reject foreign help or consultation. On the contrary, in my firm belief there is always room for cooperation involving foreign experts, and leaders in their domains. In Tunisia committees would always be beneficial as they would contribute to reform with Tunisian experts, who I believe, are familiar with the social context, history, culture, beliefs, ideologies and needs of the nation. Therefore they will save time and move forward to practice.

6.1.2. Desired futures

The data analysis revealed another very important theme - desired futures - as the participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the conditions of TEFL in Tunisia, and voiced their concerns about the future of learning environments. They mainly requested immediate changes and improvements in the following areas: Professional development programs, Curricula, and Teacher Training programs. I summarized their quotes expressing their desires for change in a “wish list” (See Appendix 10).

6.1.2.1. Professional development

TEFL and education, in general, are changing rapidly. Teachers need to update their knowledge regarding the latest trends in teaching, and to be aware of best practices around the world in order to cope with globalized education and meet international standards. I believe this is a major priority to be addressed in Tunisia. It was obvious throughout my research that teachers were dissatisfied with the current teacher development programs, which they described as “inconsistent” and “unprofessional”. Therefore, in order to cover teachers’ needs and ensure efficient and proficient professional development programs in Tunisia, research in the field should be conducted and needs analysis strategies should be followed with a view to assessing teachers’ needs and working on responding to their demands.

Professional development (PD) is the process of learning, which starts with initial teacher training (TT) before engaging in teaching and continues through teacher development (TD) - opportunities while teaching. Lange (1990) claims "teachers continue to evolve in the use, adaptation and application of their art and craft "(Lange, 1990, p. 250). Teachers need to develop in their careers in order to cope with the rapid changes of the world, and ensure they have updated information and skills. Similarly, Day & Sachs (2004) define Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as "all the activities in which teachers engage in during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work "(Day & Sachs, 2004, p.3). This process is intended to result in on-going teachers’ learning, a process by which teachers move towards expertise as suggested in (Craft, 2000; Kelly, 2006). PD involves different aspects such as; pedagogy, methodology, technology, and learning approaches.

I believe PD is a long process that needs careful planning in order to ensure successful implementation of such vital changes in the system. The first step would be to train teacher trainers, who would ensure quality delivery of content and avoid confusion.

In the recent past, there have been situations – in primary schools – where many teachers were confused when new information was delivered to them as discussed in the data analysis chapter. This was mainly due to the unconscious rejection of change, which was, in their beliefs, more extra work and uncomfortable situations. Savasci-Acikalin (2009) states that beliefs refer to suppositions, commitments, and ideologies and do not require a *truth* condition while knowledge refers to factual propositions and the understandings that inform skilful action and must satisfy *truth* conditions.

According to the data collected about teachers' expectations about the desired EFL environment, which I summed up in figure.8, training programs should involve recent trends and concepts of teaching that must be reflected in curricula, such as critical thinking and action research.

Critical Thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally, it includes the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking. Such a skill empowers individual lives and invests in a collective future. Brookfield (1991) states "critical thinking involves recognizing and researching assumptions that undergird thoughts and actions" (Brookfield, 1991, p.17). One of the scopes in which critical thinking research penetrates is language teaching, as explained in Campbell (2000), because it is a complex interaction that includes "subject matter, content, teacher characteristics, student characteristics, pedagogy, resources, and learning context" (Campbell, 2000, p.50).

Action Research is another asset to the educational system because it turns teachers into researchers, and they become aware of the complexity of teaching, in line with new methods. As the teachers convert to reflective practitioners, they enhance critical thinking, develop themselves, and become more effective in their careers. Carr and Kemmis, two of the leading advocates of educational action research, state "Action

research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out (Carr and Kemmis 1986, p.162). Action Research links theory to practice and helps teachers' autonomy (Edge & Richards, 1993; Freeman, 1998; Woodward, 1992).

I believe these aspects are mandatory to any learning environment, but according to the teachers' responses in the interviews, these aspects are missing in the educational field in Tunisia. It is also worth noting that teachers should not always expect to be spoon fed; they are talking about an 'information age' and a 'technology boom', but they do not seem to benefit from them. I believe teachers should seek out learning from different sources and educate themselves about the different aspects they think are missing in the curricula. This might not be sufficient but could always be helpful in order to narrow the gap. Green (2002) argues "Lifelong learning policies are, in a sense, also responding to these changes in cultural life" adding "Individualized learning careers involve individuals taking responsibility for constructing their own learning pathways and sustaining their own employability. They also mean institutions being responsive to their individual needs" (Green, 2002, p.618).

One more reason for teachers to strive for on-going training is that those pedagogical aspects, though they might not be addressed in training, should be present in curricula; and thus teachers are expected to be aware of the different approaches and techniques available. It is therefore a good incentive to foster lifelong learning and enhance action research, independent learning, and critical thinking in order to instil these values in all the sectors. For the sake of the generations to come we need to ensure lifelong learning is taken on board by the workforce in general.

Moreover, globalization has huge impacts on different aspects in different societies, according to McIlwraith Education Report, Tunisia was the first Mediterranean state to sign the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement (EMA) in 1995, and is on-track to become part of the Euro-Mediterranean free trade area. As a result, the government has become interested in how to communicate better with its European partners. McIlwraith Education developed a ten-year plan for restructuring ELT and learning for the Tunisian Ministry of Education and Training. The project is subject to the Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Tunisian governments, and will be implemented under the British Council 'English for the Future' Project. Green (2002) argues "Globalization has impacted not only economies but also cultures and lifestyles. At a surface level, national cultures appear to have become more homogeneous with the global penetration of Anglo-phone western cultural practices." (Green, 2002, p. 617)

6.1.2.2. Teacher Training programs

In Tunisia, the first level of EFL instruction began in the seventies in secondary schools (grade 10), and ever since teachers were prepared just to teach teenagers. Later on, EFL started spreading across different levels, preparatory and primary. Today it is officially taught to grade six students onward (As shown in the report: Tunisian Ministry of Education signs MoU with British Council for huge ELT project).

Therefore, there was a dilemma as on the one hand specialized English teachers were not trained to teach English to young learners, and on the other hand, primary teachers were not trained to teach the English language. Decision makers came up with legitimate explanations to opt for option two, which says primary teachers should teach English to primary students. Ben Afia, the supervisor in charge of the project, (2003) claimed that it was not possible to resort to English graduates coming from university departments of English to teach in primary schools; instead she called for language training for *established* primary school teachers, and according to regulations only

primary school teachers should be club “animateurs” (French word for facilitators). As mentioned earlier, when English was first introduced in primary schools, it was a club activity rather than an assessed school subject. She added “these have the pedagogy but have forgotten their English having never used it since the baccalaureate. They majored in the subjects related to primary schools: French, Arabic, Math, Biology, Music, etc., but not English hence, the need to train primary school teachers in English” (Ben Afia, 2003, p. 24). Primary school teachers were preferred to teach English to primary students on the assumption that they were already equipped with the appropriate pedagogy for teaching all school subjects and accustomed to dealing with young learners, and this pedagogical knowledge can be transferred to the teaching of English, as further explained in Chaabouni Fourati (2009).

However, primary teachers were not satisfied with the new project and their work conditions (as noted in my interviews). This is in keeping with Chaabouni Fourati (2009) stating that the participants in this study are teachers who have not majored in English, but are involved in Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL). She also found out in her research that primary teachers were aware of their specific “weakness as converting teachers”; forty two point two per cent of them expected difficulties in their new assignment with linguistic difficulties reaching a level as high as eighty three point three per cent. As ways to overcome them, forty per cent of the teachers proposed self-development, thirty three per cent suggested practice and twenty seven per cent thought of training.

The participants in my research, either teaching primary level or higher levels, expressed their dissatisfaction with this abrupt decision about teaching English in primary schools. They thought it was ‘unthought-of and unplanned’. Teachers were not well prepared for this project; it was imposed as mentioned earlier by the ex-president, and thus was a top-down decision. Implementers had to execute orders no matter how feasible they were. Therefore, the English language had to be taught in spare rooms

or even small kitchens in some areas. Primary school teachers had to be trained to teach English by senior English teachers, who did not receive any training to train teachers. Most of the schools did not have adequate facilities for language learning; such as labs or even cassette players. However, as per the official letter mentioned earlier, these shortcomings have by now been detected and the new committee seems to be aware of the flaws in the project and plans to work on avoiding them in the next step. The question, therefore, is how can the current situation be remedied?

Additionally, teacher training programs have to be revised and more specialized programs should be included at universities. It is worth noting that different schooling levels require different methodologies and pedagogies; for instance TEFL in primary schools involves teaching children how to write the alphabet, whereas in secondary schools teachers move quickly through such skills because students have already learned this in French. I recall here my own experience as an EFL teacher, trained to teach English in the Tunisian context - secondary level. In 2000, I was hired by Emirati Model Schools to teach English, and to my surprise it was a primary school, the concept was different and the whole learning environment was alien to me. I had to struggle academically and methodologically with the students to do my job. My point here is, to be a specialized English teacher does not mean to be able to teach all levels. Primary level requires children's pedagogy, whereas preparatory level needs teenaged pedagogy, and with secondary level students you have to deal with adolescents/ adults. Therefore, the whole concept in teaching across these levels is different.

6.1.2.3. Existing Curricula

The topic of curricula drew the attention of teachers in the interviews; almost all of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with current curricula, as well as their wishes to change them. Nevertheless, there were controversial views regarding course books and materials. Some participants and mainly those working in primary education, favoured imported materials, because when they first started the program they used 'the red bus' books, which were more appealing than the local books. They claimed that imported materials cater for 'innovation', 'novelty', 'creativity', and 'global' modernism. Other participants rejected the idea of imported materials because they represent 'imperialism' as well as 'cultural dependency', which have distinctly negative social consequences. They argue that local exigencies and needs are better known by local experts and that Tunisian professionals have good potential and can produce relevant materials. And given the access to the internet, teachers would have a greater range of references and resources online; hence materials should not be an issue anymore.

Canagarajah (1999) among others has pointed out how imported EFL materials and methods enshrine postcolonial values, reinforcing the dominance of the Western, more technologically advanced "centre" over the "periphery". Using locally produced materials might be one way of responding to the problem; he suggests "to adopt creative and critical instructional practices in order to develop pedagogies suitable for their communities" (p. 122). I believe that pedagogies and materials alike should stem from current experiences and reinforce local needs, and that is in line with Kumaravadivelu (2001) who thinks that all pedagogy, like all politics, is local, and to ignore local exigencies is to ignore lived experiences.

However, it is noteworthy that with the rise of globalization, societies and cultures have become integrated through a global network of communication. Shohamy (2006)

argues that the very *conception of language/s* by most linguists as socially-bounded, grammatically-closed systems is manipulated for political/ideological agendas that cast languages as fixed, stagnated, pure, unchanging, hegemonic, standard, and oppressive and through school teaching, mass media and other ideological agents.

Hence, it is not possible to draw sharp lines between local and global needs. Additionally, it is undeniable that imported computer technology is essential if students are to be prepared to face the borderless world we now live in. I think a further point to consider is that the production of EFL materials is a business, and marketing these educational products is tightly related to supply and demand. Therefore, in the absence of quality local technology, any society would be bound to utilize and promote imported materials as a first choice.

Additionally, I believe teachers should have a voice in curriculum development because as stated in Danielson (2002), while conducting a study about teachers views on curriculum planning in Egypt “curriculum is the vehicle through which educators make manifest their goals for student learning” (ibid, 2002, p. 77). And it is the quality of instruction that “represents the single most important aspect of any school’s program for ensuring student success” (ibid, 2002, p. 106). He added teachers’ perceptions of the curriculum development process also include affective aspects and engaging teachers in the curriculum development process creates a sense of ownership and investment in the curriculum developed.

6.1.3. Recommendations for English Language Teaching in Tunisia

Overall, there is no doubt that change in LP as a whole and TEFL approaches has to happen in order to assist in all the following aspects of Tunisian life; social, economic, cultural, and political. Almost all participants in my interviews agreed that TEFL policy must change. On the one hand, it has to reflect the 2011 Tunisian revolution principles; for instance freedom, human rights and openness to the world. On the other hand, it must abide by the globalized world demands. Thus, LP and TEFL are intertwined and the development of TEFL depends heavily on LP decisions. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to LP and practical approaches to TEFL in particular must be reached and established.

Spolsky (2004) argues that it makes sense to look generally at the policy revealed in the language practices of the society, "the real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices than in management. Unless the management is consistent with the language practices and beliefs, and with the other contextual forces that are in play, the explicit policy written in the constitution and laws is likely to have no more effect on how people speak than the activities of generations of school teachers vainly urging the choice of correct language" (2004, p. 222). This definitely means that the national debate about LP in Tunisia either on social networks (see social networks) or in the media (see Assabah newspaper) or in any other social aspect must grab policy and decision makers' attention and be taken into consideration. Moreover, Green (2002) believes that education policy is nowadays an international affair; it is not restricted to internal affairs any more. He argues "education policy was once a largely national affair, now thanks to improved communications and cross-national data, and because of the global pressures of competition and transnational politics, it is a fully internationalized, and at times an internationally-traded, commodity" (2002, p. 611).

As discussed in previous chapters, Tunisian society is inclined to enhance the English language learning opportunities in order to cope with a unified world, have access to the world's up to date information, and benefit from global opportunities that recognize English as the world's language of communication. Tunisian youth are nowadays looking for job opportunities outside the country either to solve unemployment problems or to improve financial conditions. Therefore, they need to increase their chances by having a good command of English. It is also common knowledge that Gulf countries hold the best opportunities for job seekers, but these countries operate in English rather than French. It is true that the Tunisian expertise is highly appreciated in those countries. Nevertheless, English remains the biggest hurdle for Tunisians. This explains why the Gulf job market is more open to Middle East Arabs, who master the English language, and is restricted - when it comes to Tunisians - to a very limited category of jobs. For instance, English teachers and the tourism sector. Tunisian doctors or engineers have a very poor presence in the Gulf, because they lack the language of communication (English) of these Arab countries. Therefore, if Arab countries nowadays fail to communicate together in Arabic, and eventually enhance more the English language in order to facilitate communication with each other, I wonder to what extent Arabisation in Tunisia would be beneficial to the community.

Additionally, it became obvious that Tunisian youth are not yet proficient in English and cannot find solutions for their social and economic problems in English speaking countries. But they can still manage to work in France or Canada because they are fluent in French. Therefore, to what extent would regression in French be beneficial to the Tunisian society? Would not such a decision be restrictive to the elite and marginalize the majority?

Hawkins (2008) confirms in his study about language use in Tunisia "English, French and Arabic can coexist in academic institutions without challenging the nature or role of those institutions. The important issue is not so much what particular language is

used as how any language is used. How to use a language involves habits of the mind and body quite beyond the linguistic challenge of learning a language "(Hawkins, 2008. p. 371). Therefore, I think a compromise in setting LP in education should be reached in order to maintain this view, and ensure a successful coexistence of the three languages. I believe a linguistic stability in society in at least *one* language guarantees the success of the others. Hence, if students master one language fully, this will definitely help them develop other languages because "power resides not in the access to the language, but in access to the discourses "as stated in Hawkins (ibid). Moreover, enterprises have become 'learning organizations' capable of continuous adaptation and change (Stahl et al., 1993), and employees have to acquire multiple skills at different levels of complexity (Breen, 2002), hence the importance of a solid educational background to support students and employees take charge of their learning and professional development.

I believe the Ministry's first decision to introduce English in primary schools was driven by an interest in improving the status of English throughout the state system of education. It was definitely a good decision and introducing EFL in early ages is the right move. However, this decision was so abrupt that it was neither preceded by efficient planning nor followed up effectively for assessment and improvement. It was officially declared in the Education Act (2002) that "foreign languages shall be taught in primary schools, being seen as a means of communication and a way of being acquainted with the discoveries of the thinking world in the fields of technology, scientific theory and cultural standards; students can thus keep abreast of developments in these fields and make contributions that will enrich the national culture and promote its interaction with universal human culture "(Article 51, p. 22). I believe such a decision needs to be taken more seriously in order to be implemented successfully, because English is the language of sciences, technology, and business; therefore it should be improved in society and people should be encouraged to learn it. The Ministry of Higher Education seems to acknowledge this view, and has started implementing some changes to enhance the English language at university level. This

was related to the last decade's decision to introduce English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in all universities in order to widen the students' scope in research. Besides, two years ago, Tunis Business School (TBS), the first state university where the language of instruction for *all* subjects is English, was launched and today it is fully operating with its third cohort. Therefore, English as a language of instruction at university level might be a viable alternative. Would it be possible then to see engineering or medicine being taught through English in the future?

Chaabouni Fourati (2009), states that the primary school teachers who tried to convert to English teachers, as explained in chapter 5, could not rely on self-monitoring because they were not trained and did not have adequate language input. Teachers should be trained and encouraged to use a reflective model of training, and change pedagogical practices for instance start using *realia* and the "active method" and introduce the "fun" element in learning, which seems to be more difficult to adjust to because it does not seem to be in the culture of educational systems in Tunisia.

Educational policy makers frequently spend a great deal of time discussing and analysing the teaching requirements for a particular course, skill or action. However, very often, there is a little focus upon how much learning has taken place. Therefore, an effective and accurate assessment strategy for Tunisian TEFL is vital and must be given as much weight and importance as curricula.

I also recommend that TEFL curricula documents be made available to all English teachers across different levels. These documents are very important because they do not only describe the learning that is expected to take place during a course in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, but also describe the main teaching, learning and assessment methods, and give an indication of the learning resources required to support the effective delivery of the course.

I believe the problems with TEFL are not purely linguistic rather they are pedagogical and didactic, and solutions need to be worked out for all the subjects in the educational system across the board through different languages. Tunisian students should learn major life skills, and teachers need to be trained to deliver such knowledge efficiently. It is noteworthy that pedagogy, which seems to be devalued in teacher training programs in Tunisia, is crucial to teaching. Thus, it should be fostered through teacher training and recycled through professional development on a continuous basis.

Kim (1997) recommends standard reforms in TEFL. He contends that any reform for curriculum can make use of the experience of other countries in the world selectively, and suggests the following seven underlying concepts for TEFL curriculum design taken from different curricula around the world:

1. Learner centred curriculum
2. Communicatively designed
3. Proficiency based approach
4. Integration of the four skills from the beginning of instruction
5. Connecting EFL instruction with other disciplines
6. Fostering a high level of intellectual functions
7. Flexible and eclectic way of presenting contents

Equally, Breen (2002) states "Many of the policy changes that have occurred in curriculum and assessment across the EU Member States in recent years have shared a common orientation and relate to the contextual factors that have been identified above [by Kim]. At the compulsory school level, there has frequently been an increased emphasis on FL learning, IT, the key competencies of numeracy, communications, team-working, and decision-making. "

In the English Language Reform Project Implementation Plan report, June 2010, the McIlwraith Education agency suggested implementing the Common European Framework as a remedial plan to help improve English language's status in Tunisia. However, the Common European Framework is a standard framework for teaching languages that were mainly designed to help *European* students, which I think is not the best solution for the Tunisian TEFL situation, because we need to create an internal system for Tunisian students and teachers which meets local cultural standards, but also acquires full international recognition. Therefore, the framework could serve as guide but adjustments should be done at a local level in order to ensure success for further reforms.

To justify this, as reported in The Guardian newspaper (UK), the ministry of education in Colombia recently adopted the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The ministry wants all English tests in school and universities to be aligned to the CEFR in the future, this was following the suggestion of Van de Putte, ELT manager at the British Council, who said "Adopting the CEFR is an important first step in raising English proficiency," adding "the standard of English is appalling, ...ninety per cent of school leavers do not have a basic level of English and sixty three per cent of English teachers are not at intermediate level." But the Colombian ministry of education has also identified the need to raise teachers' standards of English first and it has funded various ELT workshops across the country to improve their language skills and brush up on their classroom teaching methods. I believe this is a priority and teachers' weaknesses have to be addressed before implementing any further reform.

Therefore, in Tunisia we need to initiate a workable framework based on the SMART goals convention: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely. In order to produce a generation of students who are capable in all skills in the English language, we need to ensure that students would strive to learn the language, and to enhance critical thinking in curricula, as well as to foster independent learning skills, so as to equip students with lifelong learning and study skills. In addition we need to raise

students' awareness about ethics, time, responsibility, professionalism, culture and traditions. In this way, I believe we could guarantee success for TEFL reform in the Tunisian Educational system.

We also need to safeguard a smooth change that caters for both stages: The present (the current situation) and the future (the desired situation) at the same time. Therefore, I would suggest an initial framework for a strategic plan that supports recent changes in TEFL on the one hand, and paves the way for future reforms on the other.

According to Shand (2007) Strategic Planning is the process of developing strategies to achieve a desired outcome. He states "the tag strategic" indicates that the planning operates at the highest level of the organisation, taking into account the "big picture". Strategic planning seeks to create a better future by influencing the external environment or modifying current plans to work to your advantage within the external environment. He identifies three levels of planning tactical plan, long term plan, and strategic plan: The Tactical plan outlines the individual methods used to achieve an objective. The Long term plan forecasts the future by understanding current activities and trends; it seeks to influence the external environment to achieve a better outcome. Strategic planning, therefore, provides an opportunity to think about the future, understand the current reality and plan how to realise a vision.

Shand (2007) states two Strategic Planning Approaches, therefore, two different methodologies for strategic planning: The Situation Target Path (STP) process and the Draw-See-Think-Plan (D-S-T-P) method. These alternatives are equally valid but the STP process is more commonly used. The STP identifies where you are and how to get where you want to be (through draw and see). Sets the goals you want to achieve, and traces the steps you need to achieve them (through think and plan). Whereas, the D-S-T-P method, helps you draw - what you want things to look like in the future. Make

you see - what things look like now and identifies the gap between vision and reality. And leads you to think - what actions needed to close the gap and then to plan - what resources are needed to carry out those actions.

Shand adds “the approach you use depends on how clear your vision of the future is. If you already have a clear vision then the STP process would be suitable. If your organisation’s vision is not clearly defined then the Draw-See-Think-Plan method would be more powerful.” For my proposal, I believe the latter approach D-S-T-P is appropriate for my study because the vision for TEFL reform in Tunisia is not yet clearly defined.

The Strategic planning process for TEFL in Tunisia would hence be based on the Draw-See-Think- Plan model, which is represented in the following questions:

1. Draw: What is the ideal image or the desired end state (desired future situation)?
2. See: What is today's situation?
3. Think: What specific actions must be taken to close the gap between today's situation and the ideal state?
4. Plan: What resources are required to execute the activities?

Hence we need, firstly to identify the areas that should be involved in the reform, Secondly, to question each area following the model above, and identify the gaps between the Status Quo and the desired future of TEFL in Tunisia. Then we need to think about an operational structure for each area. Finally, and in order to guarantee the results and help the project succeed, we have to create a network of communication between the different areas so as to ensure consistency across the board because of the interdependence of all areas. Once this system is operational, we can ensure a sound and well-structured reform process.

I am suggesting in my thesis recommendations toward future educational reforms, LP in Education, therefore I have identified the following four areas, which I believe are the pillars of education and language learning.

1. Language Policy in Education
2. Teacher training and Professional Development
3. Curricula
4. Learning Support

I mapped a proposal that could serve as a preliminary strategic plan for a general reform in TEFL in Tunisia -as shown in the table below (Figure 10). I considered the four foremost contributors to the learning process I have identified significant - LP in education, teacher training and professional development, curricula, and learning support- and then I applied the Draw-See-Think- Plan model of strategic planning on the four areas as follows:

1. **Draw:** In the draw column, I thought of the 'ideal status' of TEFL in Tunisia and I tried to imagine a 'perfect image' for after the TEFL reform, which was close to the teachers' desires and expectations for the future as described in the interviews.
2. **See:** I described the status quo of TEFL in Tunisia and identified the gaps that should be addressed in order to reach the perfect status.
3. **Think:** After that, I suggested action plans that would help close the gap between the current status and the ideal one.
4. **Plan:** Lastly, I identified the resources needed in order to implement the plan and reach the desired picture.

The outcome is represented in the table below, figure 20. Please note that teachers' requests and wishes about their situation is embedded in the plan, and taken in the conclusion.

Strategic Planning Model	DRAW	SEE	THINK	PLAN
Areas to be addressed	What is the ideal image or the desired end state?	What is today's situation? What is the gap from ideal and why?	What specific actions must be taken to close the gap between today's situation and the ideal state?	What resources are required to execute the activities
Language Policy in Education	<p>Clear and coherent language policy in education. Conducive to learning.</p> <p>Officials who are capable in all skills to make decisions, implement changes, and evaluate policies.</p>	<p>The current language policy in education is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear • Inconsistent • Keeps changing <p>Officials do not make effective plans and decisions.</p> <p>There is no clear evaluation system.</p>	<p>To formulate policies that support English language learning across the different school levels.</p> <p>To ensure that the Ministry of Education officials and education managers build their skills in decision making and improve education policies.</p> <p>Set up an evaluation system.</p>	<p>Train officials to reconcile between political essentials and linguistic needs.</p> <p>Involve experts in the field of linguistics in language policy decision making.</p> <p>Establish an Education Management Information System able to provide timely and accurate education data to policy makers.</p>
Curricula: Teaching & Assessment Materials	<p>Quality instructional materials</p> <p>Supportive curricula</p> <p>Developed standard-based Education frameworks</p>	<p>Materials are not standards-driven</p> <p>Curricula need to be updated</p> <p>Curricula do not support global learning</p>	<p>Experts need to work with teachers and education officials in order to develop appropriate, quality instructional materials and learning tools, and assessment protocols.</p>	<p>Train teachers in standards-driven teaching and learning.</p> <p>Train teachers to develop effective teaching materials, content knowledge, and</p>

	Standards- driven learning materials Standards- driven assessment strategies		Align assessment with learning materials according to standards	classroom instruction.
Teachers' Support & Professional Development	Head teachers well-trained in education management and leadership, and are capable of supporting teachers' professional development through their careers. Sound communication between the levels and consistency in teaching approaches Successful Pedagogy	No clear plans for teachers' support across the levels. Primary teachers teaching English despite not specializing in TEFL. No communication between different levels Pedagogy is an essential resource for teachers.	We need to formulate policies to support teachers' professional development We need to design, implement, and evaluate teacher training programs Support teachers and extend training expertise consistently from teachers' pre-service training to in-service training opportunities	Train head teachers in education management and leadership including techniques for supporting teachers and the professional Development Plans. Train teachers in standards-driven teaching and learning. Plan to avail Pedagogical training for teachers
Learning Environment Support	Well-equipped classrooms using up-to-date technology and materials. Teachers trained in the latest classroom techniques.	Poorly-equipped classrooms Absence of technology No preparation for changes No follow up after the changes	Higher investments, bigger budgets, international assistance/ cooperation. Make plans to ensure smooth plans.	Make Technology Easily accessible and avail reproducible materials Train teacher on different applications

Figure 20: Proposal: Reform plan

Conclusion

It has been my intention throughout my research, to create an initial proposal of strategic planning for future reforms in Tunisia, which I believe is a vital step in the transitory period. The plan also caters for the challenges the teachers have faced with a view of improving working conditions and providing the support they need. The strategic plan I have suggested is generic, and could be extended to different subjects and languages in the educational system because the policy I propose is a lifelong learning policy, which aims to respond to global economic changes mainly by seeking ways to increase general levels of learning and skills whatever the language of instruction may be. Therefore, through this proposal, I aim to contribute not only to TEFL reform in Tunisia, but also to the Tunisian educational system as a whole, where TEFL constitutes just one element. Hence, consistency across the different elements of the educational subjects for instance, science, maths, languages and arts; ensure success for each component in education including TEFL. It is noteworthy that the ultimate target for the reform is the students and their learning environment. Ultimately, we need to enhance lifelong learning skills, raise awareness about professional self-development culture, promote critical thinking, and improve the conditions of the learning environment.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

Introduction

In this final chapter, firstly, I will summarize the key ideas emerging from my thesis about the TEFL situation in Tunisia and the LP debate status quo. Secondly, I will demonstrate how the findings from my thesis support and contribute to the Tunisian national reform in education and discuss how the notion of LP as a blend of linguistics and politics supports the success of LP in education. Next, I will discuss how my research and recommendations respond to the teachers' desires for a better future for TEFL in Tunisia and suggest some ideas for future research that emerged from my own research. Finally, I will conclude the chapter with personal reflections on my journey through my EdD thesis.

7.1. Key ideas emerging from my thesis

Findings from my research can be broadly categorised into two key ideas: Firstly, the disjunction between EFL teachers' actual perceptions and desires about TEFL future and the policymakers' current plans and practices. And secondly, the urgent need for immediate changes in TEFL practices vis à vis LP in the Tunisian educational system.

7.1.1. Disjunction between policymakers' practices and EFL teachers' perceptions

Primarily, findings from my research show that English language teachers in Tunisia have their own perceptions of an ideal situation for TEFL. However, policymakers have different priorities and are still not implementing the changes requested and expected by the teachers. These disjunctions are noticed in three major areas, the status of the

English language, Arabisation in education, and foreign intervention in educational reforms.

7.1.1.1. The status of the English language

This study shows that teachers believe that along with the trends of globalization and the technology boom, which are heavily felt in Tunisia, TEFL should be given more space and time in curricula in order to help students become global citizens. They expect the authorities to devote more effort and time on how to improve TEFL in schools. This may be taking place; still, tangible results are yet to be seen at the school level. However, it is clearly noticeable that the authorities are widening the scope as far as teaching different languages other than English in schools is concerned. For instance, by offering more language opportunities there would be greater possibilities for international cooperation and study abroad, which are no longer limited to English or French speaking countries. Hence, in addition to studying through the usual mainstream ones, English and French, there are nowadays more opportunities to study through Chinese, Turkish, Japanese, and Korean. These practices are coherent with the 2012 political discourse, which enhances banning the single-foreign-language system that makes the Maghreb - mainly North African countries - Francophone and the Mashreq - Middle East and The Arabian Gulf - Anglophone. These are the current practices as noticed in the ministry website; however, this LP is still at the debate level and has not been officially documented.

7.1.1.2. Arabisation in education

My research has also clearly shown that English teachers' demonstrated enthusiasm about enhancing English language learning either through teaching some school subjects in English, for instance the sciences - or through devoting more focus on TEFL. However, nowadays, policy makers seem to be taking "Arabising" more subjects in schools and universities more seriously. Nevertheless, this is still at the initial debate stage and no action has been taken in this respect. Therefore, the perception of more English through teaching different subjects via the medium of English, rather than French or Arabic, does not seem either realistic or even plausible.

7.1.1.3. Foreign intervention in education reforms

My study also unveiled teachers' views on foreign intervention in educational reform. A few teachers favour the ministry's plans to hire agencies in order to evaluate the educational system in Tunisia and have suggested implementing possible reform plans. However, another group of teachers reject this idea and believe that foreign intervention in education reforms stimulates hegemony and imperialistic ideas. They also think this would marginalise the local culture and products, for instance school books and extra materials, because foreign agency would recommend foreign materials and reject local ones. Therefore, I believe a consensus should be reached in order to narrow the gap between both points of views by involving local experts in decision making, which would lead to a balanced solution that could satisfy all requirements.

7.1.2. Desired futures

The research reveals that teachers need pragmatic solutions for everyday situations, hence the need to improve the teaching and learning conditions in schools, update curricula, and further develop teachers skills to cope with the challenges of the new globalized learning era.

7.1.2.1. Professional development

Also illustrated is the teachers' emergent need for effective support and sound professional development plans that cater not only for TEFL strategies and curricula, but also for up to date educational technology and the latest approaches to learning. Teachers realise the discrepancy between global development in teaching strategies, mainly with the invasion of technology and local approaches to the environment of learning.

7.1.2.2. Teacher Training programs

Initially, teachers of English in Tunisia were prepared and trained to teach the English language to secondary school students, but today English is taught across three levels at school, including primary, preparatory, and secondary. Although a few changes were implemented in teacher training programs, and intensive courses were given to primary teachers, these measures remain insufficient and much more work is needed to be done in order to ensure effective training for teachers at different school levels.

7.1.2.3. Curricula and learning skills

Teachers across the different levels showed a great concern about the curricula on the one hand, and supporting materials on the other. They believe curricula should be updated to cope with global learning skills; they should involve critical thinking and cater for lifelong learning skills.

7.2. Limitations of my research

As my research was carried out, there has been, in parallel, many discussions and outcomes from the Tunisian Ministry of Education and the local authorities. Nevertheless, the specific details of future LP remain within the jurisdiction of governments, and are not available to the public at large, especially to academic researchers. As a result, the recommendations included herein are based upon the information currently disseminated. Therefore, it is my intention to contribute to the debate about LP in the belief that my research provides a detailed and far-reaching framework to support the national educational reform.

7.3. Theoretical and pedagogical contributions of the research

My research has investigated the current situation of TEFL in Tunisia and the current national debate about LP in education. I considered how the interface between people, politics and languages can affect social, cultural and economic lives, and highlighted how globalization has impacted not only economic but also cultural lifestyles. I also became aware that the economic course of globalization provides the major determining force behind educational reform, and involves major restructuring in different aspects of Tunisian society.

I believe my research provides a comprehensive picture of the situation of LP and the status of TEFL in Tunisia, and adds to the educational debate of the local community, and also to the policy makers. In order to consider the implications of my study, I have made several recommendations and have designed an initial framework in order to support the on-going reform of TEFL in my country. Tunisia has developed, and is still developing, new policies across different political and cultural sectors and more changes and research need to be implemented in order to reach required standards at all levels. This study is an attempt to contribute to the process of building a new Tunisia. I also believe the recommendations and strategic planning proposed hereby are not restricted to Tunisia and could contribute greatly to the long- term development of learning Foreign Languages across other nations and mainly those whose first language is Arabic. One day, it might be possible to develop a Common Arabic Framework of References for languages: Learning, teaching and assessment (*CAFR*)

Hopefully, the pedagogical contributions of my thesis will be recognised and worked on in order to improve the teachers' situations, curricula, and the learning environment. I believe my research indicates the lack of adequate resources for TEFL in Tunisia and proves useful in voicing teachers' concerns about curricula, materials, resources and professional development programs.

Overall, my thesis provides insight into the TEFL experiences of teachers in Tunisia, the factors which influence the current linguistic situation in the area, and critical issues pertaining to the English language itself. Ultimately, my investigation provides a large scale overview of educational LP in Tunisia supports national education reform and illuminates the issue for readers in this respect. I believe my research has addressed and fulfilled the following aims:

1. To explore experiences of TEFL teachers and their understanding of language policies.
2. To gain awareness of the current situation in Tunisia and the kind of initiatives teachers in the field undertake and the reasons and factors which affect their choice.
3. To provide teachers with the opportunity to express their views on how TEFL can be improved in their context.
4. To create an awareness of all the above among teachers, the local community, and policy makers in order to consider the implications of the study for improving TEFL's situation in Tunisia.

The results of my study are significant. I believe I achieved my objectives which are mainly to contribute to existing knowledge and research relating to the current TEFL situation in Tunisia through recognition of teachers' voices and to stimulate interest in further investigation into specific aspects associated with TEFL development in different socio-cultural settings. In addition, my findings help in understanding the local situation from the -TEFL teachers' perspectives and gaining better insight into their experiences.

7.4. Future research

My thesis illustrates that the field is fertile for further investigation and research. For instance: Investigating whether policy can really alter linguistic cultures and behaviours and find out if LP actually endorses changes already underway within the community. I would like to know more about the role linguists play in shaping LP and explore the way language experts should be involved in formulating this LP. This would also lead to further exploration of the effects of overlooking socio-linguistic behaviours in policy decisions and enlighten decision makers in order to reach a compromise between political and linguistic needs as they decide on LP.

7.5. Reflection on my EdD journey

I started my research with the intent to explore and understand better the TEFL situation in Tunisia from the perspectives TEFL teachers and educators have in the field. Over the period that I gathered data for the study and analysed it, I was faced with a staggering amount of information that took almost a year to analyse and interpret. The more I engaged with my data the more sense it continued to make and the more literature I exposed myself to, the deeper my understanding about the situation became.

As I conclude my thesis, I feel more empowered and informed about both TEFL's current and prospective situation in Tunisia. Equally, my understanding of LP merits is greater than it was at the beginning of my study. As part of my conclusion and reflection I revisited the aims of my study, I noted that my initial aims have been fulfilled and achieved. This has sustained my academic interest and motivated my belief that my research is both valid and timely.

In understanding the TEFL situation in Tunisia and teachers' perceptions about the current situation, as well as their desired future, I became aware of their feelings about TEFL and their conception of LP effects on their educational journey. I discovered TEFL's status quo is not only shaped by cultural and historical factors of the local context, but also by the global and political situations which have tremendous effects on local circumstances

I learned that the teachers involved in my research are aware of their professional situation and the shortcomings of current Tunisian educational policies. In doing so I was impressed by their honesty and awareness of their own limitations and their need for more professional development. However, the teachers' voices remain unheard and the situation is not getting any better. I believe I helped them channel their voices through my study and hope they will be heard this time.

Moreover, and as a TEFL teacher myself, I experienced the growth of my own professional network. It has been my intention throughout my research to be able to create newer understandings not only for myself but also among teachers, the local community, and policy makers in order to consider the implications of the study for improving TEFL's situation in Tunisia. Finally, my research has led me to understand better the LP discourse and the linguistic merits in contributing to the development of LP in my own homeland, and hopefully will be extended to other nations and people that have common linguistic backgrounds and cultures. In a time when so many changes are occurring across the Arab world, often leading to more difficulties than previously existed, the importance of education and integration of ideas have emerged as even more significant.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Focus Group Interview Questions

I. DEMOGRAPHICS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

	Information in numbers	Number	Remarks/ extra info.
1	Number of interviewees: Total		
2	Male		
3	Female		
4	Years of experience 0-5		
5	Years of experience 6-10		
6	Years of experience more than 10		
7	Teaching in primary level		
8	Teaching in preparatory level		
9	Teaching in secondary level		
10	Non-teaching participants (specify)		Teacher trainer/ inspector
11	Teaching in cities		
12	Teaching in remote areas		

1. What do you think of the TEFL approaches and practices in Tunisia? Could you please raise any issue that needs to be discussed and studied?
2. What do you think of the situation of teaching English at the primary level in Tunisia? Are there any issues you would like to talk about?
3. What do you think of teacher training programs and professional development opportunities? Do you think the teachers and students get enough support to cope with the new trends, advanced technology, and global communication?
4. What do you think of the current English language policy in Tunisia? Do you expect any changes in TEFL policy after the revolution and in the light of the current debate about language policy?
5. What would you like to change in TEFL policy, approaches, and strategies in the future? What would make an ideal TEFL environment in the new Tunisia after the Revolution?

Appendix 2: One to One Interview Questions

- I. Could you please introduce yourself with reference to your capacities as a teacher/ teacher trainer/ inspector?**

Prompts:

(Years of experience, qualifications, level of teaching, region of teaching, gender)

- II. What are the main approaches to TEFL in use in Tunisia? What do you think of them?**

Prompts:

(Practices in classes, strategies, techniques, number of hours, class size, facilities)

- III. What do you think of the current TEFL curriculum? Do you have any suggestion for change?**

Prompts:

(Syllabus, textbooks, support, official documents, evaluation, changes)

- IV. What do you think of the changes in TEFL policy that took place in the past 5 years? What were these changes mainly about?**

Prompts:

(TEFL policy, new project in primary schools, teacher training, qualifications)

- V. Do you think teachers get sufficient professional development opportunities to cope with the global changes in TEFL?**

Prompts:

(Technology, new approaches, changes)

- VI. What do you think of the language policy in Tunisia?**

Prompts:

(Official language (s), language (s) of instruction in schools, when to start teaching English, national debate, political agenda, Arabisation, official documents for clarification)

- VII. What would make TEFL successful in Tunisia in your opinion? What would make an ideal TEFL environment in the new Tunisia after the Revolution?**

Prompts:

(Perceptions and aspirations for a desired future TEFL policy)

Appendix 3: Pilot Interview Questions

II. DEMOGRAPHICS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Could you please introduce yourself with reference to your capacities as a teacher/ teacher trainer/years of experience/ qualifications/level of teaching/ region of teaching/gender?

III. TEFL APPROACHES, STRATEGIES, AND TEACHING METHODS

1. What do you think of the current approach to TEFL in Tunisia?
2. What do you think of the current practices in classes? Number of hours, students, facilities?
3. Are the principles adapted in teaching English similar or different across the 3 levels; primary, preparatory, and secondary?

IV. STAFFING, CURRICULUM AND TEXTBOOKS

1. Do textbooks support the TEFL approach you are following?
2. Which approach do textbooks follow?
3. How would you prefer textbooks to be? Any suggestion?

V. DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

1. Do you encounter any problems in your class?
2. Do you have any official document such as a syllabus that you should follow?
3. Are you often advised of any changes in curriculum or textbooks?

VI. TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Did your university degree include a teacher preparation/education component?
2. Did you get any teacher training after graduation?
3. Did primary teachers (who are not initially teachers of English) receive any training before implementing TEFL in primary schools?

VII. TEACHERS PERCEPTION TO TEFL POLICY AND GLOBALIZATION

1. What do you think of the technological development in education?
2. Do you think the students are ready to communicate in the global world today?
3. How can the standards of English teaching be improved? Any suggestion?

VIII. TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTANCY ABOUT CHANGES IN TEFL POLICY AND CURRENT DEBATE

1. What do you think of the changes in TEFL that took place in the past 5 years?
2. What further changes in TEFL policy do you expect?
3. Which current debate about language policy are you aware of?
4. Which current debate about language policy are you in favor of?

IX. LANGUAGE POLICY AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE

1. What do you think of the current English language policy in Tunisia?
2. Do you have any official document that explains the language policy?
3. Are there any changes of English language teaching policy that you are aware of?
4. What is the political discourse today about the language policy?

X. TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR A DESIRED FUTURE TEFL POLICY

1. Do you think there should be a reform/ change in TEFL policy?
2. What would make TEFL successful in Tunisia?
3. What would you like to change in TEFL approaches and strategies in the future?
4. What would make an ideal TEFL environment in the new Tunisia after the Revolution?

Appendix 4: Survey

Please complete the information below.

<i>I am</i>	English teacher <input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher trainer <input type="checkbox"/>	Inspector <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I am</i>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>My teaching experience is</i>	1 to 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	5 to 10 years <input type="checkbox"/>	More than 10 <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I teach</i>	Primary <input type="checkbox"/>	Preparatory <input type="checkbox"/>	Secondary <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I work in</i>	City <input type="checkbox"/>		Remote area <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I have</i>	Diploma <input type="checkbox"/>	BA <input type="checkbox"/>	Master <input type="checkbox"/> other <input type="checkbox"/>

Please use the 5-point scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each statement.

	Interview Items	strongly agree	Agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
1	The class sizes are manageable	1	2	3	4	5
2	The weekly hours for English classes are sufficient	1	2	3	4	5
3	There are well-equipped labs for language teaching in schools	1	2	3	4	5
4	The textbooks in use at schools are good	1	2	3	4	5
5	Some textbooks do not need to be changed	1	2	3	4	5
6	Students get enough support in learning English	1	2	3	4	5
7	The current approach to TEFL classes is successful	1	2	3	4	5
8	It was a good decision to introduce English in the primary level	1	2	3	4	5
9	Teachers were involved in the decision about implementing English in primary schools	1	2	3	4	5
10	Teachers get sufficient professional support from the ministry	1	2	3	4	5
11	Teachers are consulted and well-informed about changes in curricula	1	2	3	4	5
12	Teachers are well-prepared for changes in curriculums	1	2	3	4	5

13	Teachers are resistant to educational changes in Tunisia	1	2	3	4	5
14	Teachers have easy access to official documents of language policy	1	2	3	4	5
15	TEFL policy should change according to the revolution principles	1	2	3	4	5
16	I think globalization requires different approaches to teaching English	1	2	3	4	5
17	Teachers should have a say in decision making	1	2	3	4	5
18	TEFL policy today is different from the pre- revolution times	1	2	3	4	5
19	The political discourse today about the language policy is inconsistent	1	2	3	4	5
20	The envisioned changes in TEFL are clear	1	2	3	4	5
21	The current debate about language policy reflects my aspirations	1	2	3	4	5
22	I am looking forward to changes in TEFL policy in Tunisia	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 5: Interview Schedules/ Timings

1. Pilot interview schedule

Date	Name	Planned Time	Actual Time	Recorded
24/12/2011	Lamia	30 mn	1 hour	Yes
27/12/2011	Anis	30 mn	35 mn	Yes

2. Focus-group interview schedule

Date	Name	Planned Time	Actual Time	Recorded
15/07/2012	8 teachers	1 hour	75 mn	Yes

3. One to one interview schedules

Date	Name	Planned Time	Actual Time	Recorded
24/07/2012	Ali	30 Minutes	35 minutes	Yes
24/07/2012	Aziz	30 Minutes	30 minutes	Yes
01/08/2012	Ines	30 Minutes	45 minutes	Yes
02/08/2012	Nadia	30 Minutes	18 minutes	Yes
03/08/2012	Sami	30 Minutes	30 minutes	Yes
03/08/2012	Sana	30 Minutes	22 minutes	Yes
12/08/2012	Lina	30 Minutes	25 minutes	Yes
12/08/2012	Slim	30 Minutes	34 minutes	Yes
1/08/2012	Yasser	30 Minutes	15 minutes	Yes
15/08/2012	Amine	30 Minutes	26 minutes	Yes
15/08/2012	Rym	30 Minutes	30 minutes	Yes
18/08/2012	Yasmine	30 Minutes	20 minutes	Yes

Appendix 6: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project. I understand that: There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

All information I give will be treated as confidential

The researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....Hala.....7/7/12.....

(Signature of participant)

(Date)

____Hela .Chaabouni.____

(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s):0507900510

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact: Samira Boukadi, sb438@exeter.ac.uk

OR

Dr Salah Troudi, salah.troudi@exter.ac.uk

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form

Appendix 7: Survey Participants' Information

Total	105
Job	
English teacher	100
Teacher trainer	3
Inspector	2
Gender	
Female	60
Male	45
Years of experience	
1 to 5 years	30
5 to 10 years	50
More than 10	25
Teaching level	
Primary	10
Preparatory	60
Secondary	35
Area of teaching	
City	80
Remote area	25
Qualification	
Diploma	10 /primary level teachers
BA	90
Master	5/ 2 teacher trainers 3/teachers
Other	0

Appendix 8: All Participants' Information

Methods	Number of participants	Female participants	Male participants
FGI	8	4	4
In-depth interviews	12	6	6
Survey	105	60	45

Appendix 9: Interview Participants' Demographics

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Qualification	Experience	Additional information
Ali	M	54	BA	28	Senior teacher in secondary schools
Aziz	M	48	BA	20	Inspector for secondary teachers
Ines	F	50	Masters	24	Teacher trainer for primary schools English teachers, originally English teacher
Nadia	F	26	BA	1	Newly recruited preparatory teacher, on probation
Sami	M	30	BA	3	Secondary level teacher, still on probation
Sana	F	34	BA	10	Taught in prep and now is secondary schools
Lina	F	44	Diploma	18	Primary level teacher, initially a French teacher
Slim	M	42	Diploma	16	Primary level teacher, initially an Arabic teacher
Yasser	M	28	BA	4	Preparatory level teacher
Amine	M	26	Masters	18	Senior teacher in preparatory school
Rym	F	32	Diploma	6	Primary level teacher
Yasmine	F	28	Doctoral student	2	Taught in secondary school as adjunct but now is pursuing doctoral studies

Appendix 10: Teachers' wish list

- "We need to have a **voice** in language policy"
- "We need to see more up to date curricula"
- "We need **consultants** to help design curricula"
- "We need clear approaches to teaching stated in black and white"
- "We need practical official documents that explain the plan"
- "We need **experts** to train teachers"
- "We need appealing textbooks"
- "We need consistency and **continuity** across levels"
- "We need to make teachers love the job"
- "We need teachers to feel comfortable, to obtain relevant **training**"
- "We need students to enjoy the class"
- "We need classrooms to be part of the real world"
- "We need English classes to be part of an **integrated approach** with all subjects"
- "We need better **facilities**"
- "We need more **resources**"
- "We need functional language labs and **interactive** software"
- "We need up to date teaching aids"
- "We need **creative** teaching"
- "We need **critical** thinking skills"
- "We need to communicate in English"
- "We need to set **high standards** and meet them"
- "We need cooperative learning"
- "We need curricula that cater for class dynamics"
- "We need curricula that cater for different learning styles"
- "We need to improve skills in **critical pedagogy**"
- "We need to fit in literature"
- "We need to fit in the fun element in learning"
- "We need to appreciate the **esthetic aspect** of teaching languages"
- "We need **Teacher Education** programs to cater for all the aspects above"

Appendix 11: Tunisian- British Programme

Tunisian-British programme to develop English language teaching in educational institutions (www.edunet.tn)



The Tunisian-British programme to develop English language teaching in educational institutions was the focal point of the meeting, held on Wednesday March 23, 2011, in Tunis, between Education Minister Taieb Baccouche and a delegation from the British Council led by Mr. Jim Butler, Director of the British Council for the Middle East and North African Region.

The meeting centred on ways to speed up implementation of this programme whose achievement is to stretch over ten years and manage the programme in a way that guarantees the hoped-for results by allowing pupils to have command of oral and written English and open broad prospects for them in Tunisia and abroad.

The programme to develop English language teaching revolves around three major axes: the first provides for promotion of books and programmes, the second is related to training and pedagogical methods, while the third focuses on assessment.

Members of the British delegation said that the programme will help, thanks to the fruitful cultural co-operation between the United Kingdom and Tunisia, to achieve significant results likely to enhance the position of the English language and its presence in different education cycles in Tunisia.

Appendix 12: Tunisian- Canadian project



Education Minister receives Canada's ambassador in Tunis (www.edunet.tn)

Canada's ambassador in Tunis Ariel Delouya underlined that the Tunisian Revolution is a unique revolution of its kind in its regional and international environments, commending the Tunisian people's profound national and civil awareness.

During his meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2011, with Education Minister Taieb Baccouche, the Canadian ambassador pointed out that the Tunisian Revolution is close to achieving its main objective, namely the consecration of democracy.

He underlined that Canada supports this peaceful and democratic transition and pledges itself to bring short- and long- term moral and material assistance, and at all levels, to the country's development.

He also placed emphasis on Canada's will to back up the Education Ministry's efforts to promote the quality of education and engage revision and reform of syllabuses, in accordance with the requirements of the stage.

For his part, Mr Taieb Baccouche specified that the Revolution opened up for the Tunisian people broader prospects of hope and changed the country's historical process, on the path of the edification of the future within a context of freedom and dignity. He pointed out that the interim government sees to it to protect the principles of the Revolution, in the first place of which the achievement of justice and guaranteeing development for all.

Appendix 13: Foundation cooperation

Friedrich Naumann" Foundation willing to strengthen co-operation with Tunisia

(www.edunet.tn)

Director of the "Friedrich Naumann" Foundation for the Mediterranean region Ronald Meinardus expressed admiration for the Tunisian Revolution which he described as "a historical stage in its regional Mediterranean environment" and also at the international level.

He stressed during his meeting, on Wednesday, March 9, 2011 in Tunis, with Education Minister Taieb Baccouche, the Foundation's readiness to strengthen co-operation with the Tunisian government in all fields, such as education, culture and science.

For his part, the minister said that the Tunisian government is open to all initiatives to support the Tunisian Revolution and the democratic process in the country.

He expressed the will to make every effort to ensure the transition to the consolidation of people's sovereignty through the election of a Constituent Assembly which will draft a new Constitution and will lead to democratic elections in accordance with international standards.

Appendix 14: Survey results

		strongly agree	agree	strongly disagree	disagree
1	The class sizes are manageable	20	5	72	8
2	The weekly hours for English classes are sufficient	26	4	70	5
3	There are well-equipped labs for language teaching in schools	0	6	80	19
4	The textbooks in use at schools are good	0	40	60	5
5	Some textbooks do not need to be changed	25	0	0	80
6	Students get enough support in learning English	5	30	60	10
7	The current approach to TEFL classes is successful	10	40	45	10
8	It was a good decision to introduce English in the primary level	0	25	80	0
9	Teachers were involved in the decision about implementing English in primary schools	7	3	95	0
10	Teachers get sufficient professional support from the ministry	0	20	85	0
11	Teachers are consulted and well-informed about changes in curricula	0	15	90	0
12	Teachers are well-prepared for changes in curriculums	5	0	100	0
13	Teachers are resistant to educational changes in Tunisia	60	20	25	0
14	Teachers have easy access to official documents of language policy	0	20	85	0

15	TEFL policy should change according to the revolution principles	105	0	0	0
16	I think globalization requires different approaches to teaching English	105	0	0	0
17	Teachers should have a say in decision making	0	75	30	0
18	TEFL policy today is different from the pre-revolution times	0	20	85	0
19	The political discourse today about the language policy is inconsistent	2	40	60	3
20	The envisioned changes in TEFL are clear	0	0	75	30
21	The current debate about language policy reflects my aspirations	25	0	80	0
22	I am looking forward to changes in TEFL policy in Tunisia	105	0	0	0

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